待った……！
敵からの誘いを……
敵、自ら
泥土に足を踏み入れるのを、
顔を伏して待った……！

賭博黙示録
カイジ 2
福本伸行

623
ヤンマガ KC
賭博黙示録 カイジ 2
福本伸行
講談社

9784063366235
雑誌 42525-23
ISBN4-06-336623-5
C9979 P520E (0)
1919979005208
講談社/定価520円(本体505円)

チョキチョキチョキと来たから
もうチョキがないなどという読みは、
まさに泥沼。
嵌っている……
すでに泥中、首まで……

The Gambling Apocalypse
KAIJI

賭博黙示録

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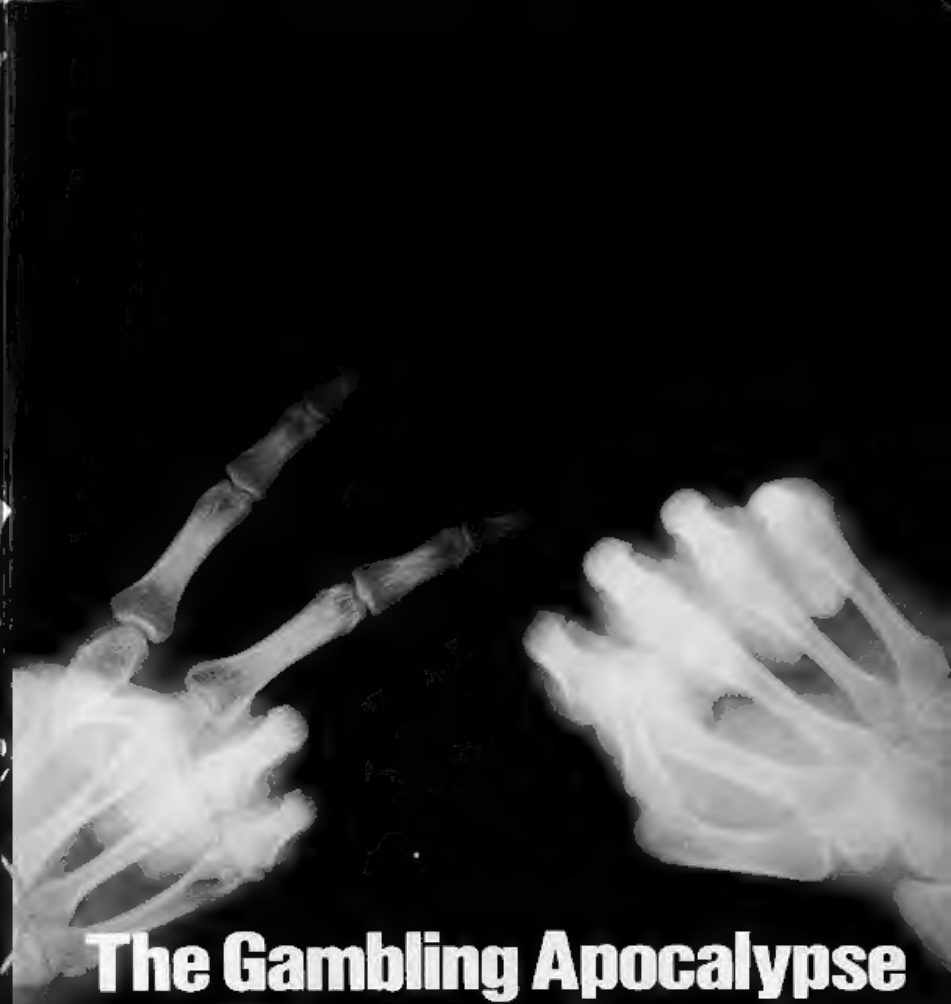

The Gambling Apocalypse

KAIJI

賭博黙示録

カイジ

2

福本伸行

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The Gambling Apocalypse

TRANSLATED AND TYPESET BY SONICKRAZY
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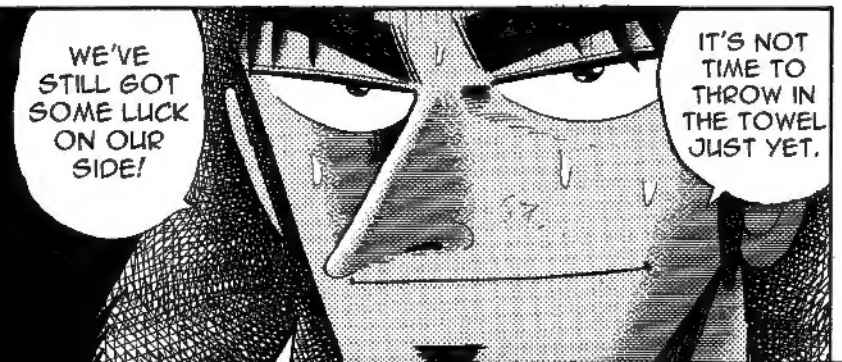

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ごわ・・!!

CHAPTER 12 - UNEASINESS

第12話「焦燥」

BE SURE TO REMEMBER THE OUTCOMES OF THOSE MATCHES.

SPECIFICALLY, KEEP TRACK OF THE NEXT TWO MATCHES HE'S IN.

WATCH HIM CAREFULLY.

I NEED YOU TO FIND A MAN WITH 9 CARDS LEFT...

THAT'S WHEN YOU COME AND GET ME.

IF IT TURNS OUT THAT HE USES A ROCK AND SCISSORS IN THE TWO MATCHES...

TO PUT IT ANOTHER WAY...

...THE ONLY THING YOU'RE WATCHING FOR IS WHAT TWO CARDS HE USES.

IN THOSE MATCHES, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF HE WINS OR LOSES THEM ...

WE CAN'T DO WHAT I HAVE IN MIND WITH ONLY ONE STAR PER PERSON...

SO I'M GONNA TRY AND BUY ANOTHER STAR.

LET'S SPLIT UP!

AND SINCE WE DO, WE CAN'T JUST SIT AROUND HERE ANYMORE!

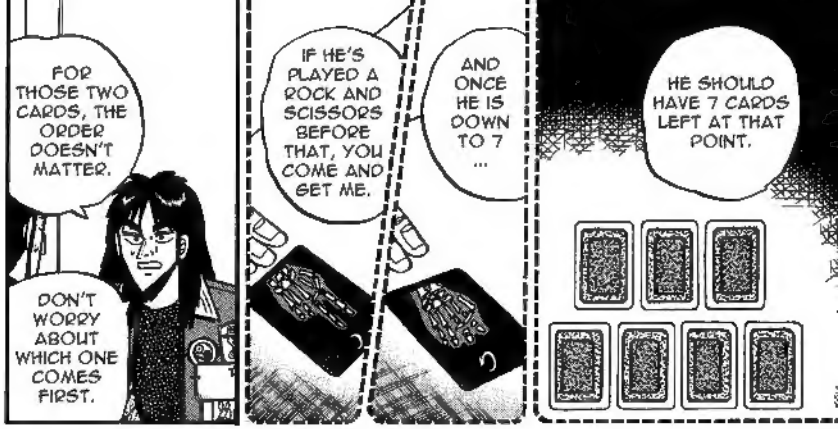
O... OKAY ...

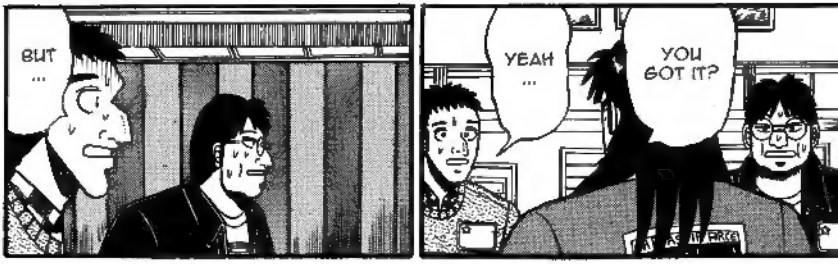
NOW, FOR THE CONDITIONS ...

.....

...I WANT YOU TWO TO FIND SOMEONE WHO MATCHES THE CONDITIONS I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU.

AND WHILE I'M DOING THAT...


FOR THOSE TWO CARDS, THE ORDER DOESN'T MATTER.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHICH ONE COMES FIRST.
IF HE'S PLAYED A ROCK AND SCISSORS BEFORE THAT, YOU COME AND GET ME.
AND ONCE HE IS DOWN TO 7 ...
HE SHOULD HAVE 7 CARDS LEFT AT THAT POINT.


BUT ...
YEAH ...
YOU GOT IT?

THE SEARCH COMES FIRST!
WHAT IF YOU GET OUT THERE AND CAN'T FIND ANYONE WITH 9 CARDS LEFT, AT ALL?!
OVER AN HOUR HAS PASSED SINCE IT STARTED ...
WE CAN'T STAND HERE TALKING FOR MUCH LONGER!
I'M SOR-RY, BUT...
WHY DO WE NEED TO DO THAT...?
I CAN'T EVEN BE-GIN TO TELL YOU MY PLAN.
WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME RIGHT NOW.

LURGH ...!
THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO LOSE!!
COME ON, GET GOING!
AND WITH THAT,
バラ... バラ...
KAIJI'S ALLIES WENT OFF TO SEARCH FOR A MAN WHO MET HIS SPECIFIED CONDITIONS.
AS FOR KAIJI HIMSELF ...
...HIS GOAL BECAME TO LOOK FOR PROSPECTIVE SELLERS OF STARS.
THIS STRATEGY OF KAIJI'S DESIGN IS NOT AT ALL GUARANTEED.
EVEN IF ALL GOES AS PLANNED, IT MIGHT HAVE A 70~80% CHANCE.
KAIJI KNOWS IT IS STILL A GREAT RISK.
NATURALLY, HE CANNOT TRY IT WITH JUST A SINGLE STAR.
HE NEEDS TO OBTAIN TWO STARS FOR HIMSELF!
THUS, THIS INITIAL SEARCH IS TRULY CRITICAL FOR HIS PLAN.

HOWEVER, THIS IS NO EASY TASK!
HOW CAN YOU EVEN ASK SUCH A THING ...?
OF COURSE I WON'T DO THAT!
HUUHHH HHH?!
...OR CHARGING FAR MORE THAN IT WAS WORTH...
NOT A SOUL WOULD TAKE KAIJI'S OFFER WITH ANY MEASURE OF SERIOUS-NESS.
MAYBE FOR 10 MILLION I'LL CON-SIDER IT!
BE IT BY IGNORING HIS PLIGHT ENTIRELY ...
STOP JOKING AROUND ...
...STILL HAD TO DEAL WITH THEIR CARDS, AND THERE-FORE DID NOT TRULY HAVE ANY KIND OF SAFETY NET.
EVEN THOSE PLAYERS WITH 5 OR 6 STARS...
MOST PEOPLE WERE STILL CAUGHT DEEP IN THE GAME AT THIS POINT.
.....
AND YET, THAT IS ONLY NATURAL.

HIS TIMING WAS OFF.
.....
IF HE WERE TO WAIT FOR ANOTHER 1 OR 2 HOURS ...
...AS THE CARDS GREW FEWER AND FEWER, THERE MIGHT BE PLAYERS WILLING TO NEGOTIATE UNDER FAIR TERMS AND GIVE UP A STAR FOR A REASONABLE PRICE.
HOW-EVER, AT THE PRE-SENT TIME...
...EVERYONE IS RUSHING TO AND FRO, HOLDING ON TO THEIR STARS AS BEST THEY CAN.
KAIJI'S PLANS TO PURCHASE A STAR HAVE BECOME DEADLOCKED.
わっ…
THERE IS NOTHING THAT HE CAN DO.
AND, WHILE KAIJI WAS FEELING PER-PLEXED ...
ANOTHER LOSER OF THIS 3-STAR GAMBLE WAS DECIDED.
HE IS NOW BEING LED TO THE OTHER ROOM.
THE MAN'S STEPS ARE SLOW AND HEAVY.
LIKE THE FOOTSTEPS OF A CRIM-INAL BEING LED TO HIS EXECUTION.
URGH ...

GYA AAA AAA AAA AUU GGG GHH HHH ...!!
THAT COULD BE ME IN A LITTLE BIT..
.....
EE EE EE ...!
YA AA AA AA UU UU GH !!!!
THE FACT THAT THIS WAS AN UNPRECE-DENTED EVENT WAS WRITTEN ALL OVER THE DEALERS' FACES.
THIS WAS NOT EX-PEC-TED.
THE SCREAMS WOULD THUS BE KEPT OUT OF THE MAIN HALL.
ORIGINALLY, THIS SYSTEM OF DUAL ROOMS WAS INTENDED TO KEEP SUCH SCREAMS FROM LEAKING OUT
THOSE SCREAMS HAD COME FROM THE ROOM FURTHEST FROM THE ENTRANCE
THERE ARE TWO ROOMS RIGHT NEXT TO EACH OTHER.
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THESE DOUBLE DOORS ...
2
1

AN ACCIDENT!
WHAT WAS THAT ..? JUST NOW...?!
AND AS A RESULT, THOSE VOICES WERE RELEASED INTO THE HALL UNHINDERED.
THE SECOND DOOR THAT LED TO THE MAIN ROOM HAD BEEN LEFT OPEN.
HOWEVER, SOME TIME BEFORE NOW ...
.....
I CAN'T HAVE IMAGINED THAT..
ONLY THOSE WHO WERE CLOSE BY WERE ABLE TO HEAR IT
...WERE STOPPED PARTWAY THROUGH THE HALL BY THE SOUND OF CONVERSATION THAT CONTINUED THROUGHOUT THE GAME.
HOWEVER, THOSE VOICES ...
PLEASE! HELP ME!!!
ANYONE!!!
Someone..!!
SCREAMING...!
Gah
THERE'S NO WAY AROUND IT .. I KNOW WHAT I HEARD
THAT GUY PROBABLY EVEN SAW FOR HIMSELF WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE
No..!!
Please stop!!!
I can't go in there!!!
THAT'S WHY HE'S SO PANICKED

パタン…
ズ
ッ
ッ
ッ

JUST WHAT'S GOING ON ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT DOOR...?
WHAT ARE THEY DOING...? THOSE GUYS...
THOSE BAS-TARDS ...
.....
THESE GUYS...
ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT.
BROKEN...?
..APE INSANE ..!!
DO THEY HAVE THEIR LIMBS CHAINED DOWN ..?
SINCE THEY DIDN'T MAKE ANY AT-TEMPT TO ES-CAPE.
OR, EVEN WORSE ...
THE SCREAMS I HEARD WERE CLEARLY TRYING TO WARN US ABOUT SOME-THING...
BUT IN THAT CASE ...

KAUT-SAAAAN!
SOME-HOW, I'VE GOT TO PULL MYSELF TOGETHER AND-...
I CAN'T LET MY-SELF LOSE EVEN ONCE FROM HERE ON OUT!
IT'S JUST LIKE I FEARED .. THIS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER.
AND I DEFIN-ITELY NEED THAT EXTRA STAR!
WE'VE GOT H.M!
WE FOUND A GUY WHO MEETS ALL OF YOUR CONDITIONS!
HE'S STILL IN THE MIDDLE OF A MATCH FOR NOW!
WE'VE GOT TO HURRY!!
HUH ..?
WELL, HE DOESN'T HAVE 7 CARDS LEFT, YET ...
BUT STILL ...
HUH ...?!
GH ...!
C'MON!!

I COULD-N'T GET ONE.
I, UH ...
.....
KAIJI-SAN! WHERE'S YOUR SECOND STAR..?
NO WAY..!!
I'D NEED TO WAIT SOME MORE IF I-..
THE PLAYERS AREN'T IN THE RIGHT MOOD TO SELL STARS, YET.
ANYWAY ...
UH ... WELL ...
I KNOW ...!!
IF WE KEEP MESSING AROUND, THEN-..
THEN . THEN WHAT DO WE DO?!
STO... STOP HIM..?
BUT HOW CAN I DO THAT..?!
THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?!?!
SO ANDOU, STOP HIM FROM PLAYING ANYONE ELSE!!
I'VE GOTTA PLAY HIM AFTER HE'S FINISHED ...
WE'VE GOTTA FOCUS

JUST GO!!
USE YOUR OWN GOD-DAMN HEAD FOR A CHANGE!!
IT'S YOUR FAULT WE'RE EVEN IN THIS FUCKIN' SPOT TO BEGIN WITH!!
I KNOW ...
KAIJI-SAN ...
THERE CAN'T BE MANY MORE PEOPLE LIKE THAT OUT THERE ..
THE CONDITIONS I GAVE TO YOU WERE REALLY SPECIFIC...
I KNOW ALL ABOUT IT, BUT ...
I KNOW ALL THAT ALREADY ...
. AND THIS IS OUR LAST ROAD TO VICTORY ...
WE'VE GOT TO SAVE OUR-SELVES ...
NO. HE MIGHT EVEN BE THE VERY LAST ONE ..!!
THIS COULD BE THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME ..!!!

THE FIRST STEP OF THAT ROAD IS A TRE-CHER-OUS ONE!

I'VE GOTTA GO INTO THE FIGHT WITH WHAT I HAVE!

WHAT CAN YOU DO?!
ガロ…
ガロ…
KAIJI-SAN ..!
YEAH ...
IS IT REALLY OKAY ..?
HUH ...?!
We're going

THE EARTH COULD CRUMBLE UNDER MY WEIGHT RIGHT AS I LAND.
OR, POSSIBLY ...
I'LL LOSE MY BALANCE AND FALL
IF THE WIND CHANGES AND MESSES UP MY JUMP
I'VE GOTTA JUMP OVER THE CRE-VICE!
THE EARTH HAS SPLIT IN TWO, BUT...
THAT IS, THAT I WIN THE MATCH!!
ALL I CAN HOPE FOR IS THAT I LAND SAFELY!
BUT I CAN'T ALLOW MYSELF TO CONSIDER THE LIKELYHOOD OF THOSE ACCIDENTS...
I CAN'T HESITATE FOR A MOMENT!
NO MATTER HOW TERRI-FYING IT IS ...
I'VE GOT TO MOVE FORWARD ...!!
I CAN'T BE A-FRAID.
KAIJI-SAN...!
LET'S GO!
WE WON'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST HOPE OF MAKING IT THROUGH
IF WE CAN'T SIEZE THIS THREAD OF A CHANCE ...

TO THE OTHER SIDE!!
第12話、終。
CHAPTER 12 - FIN.

KAIJI-SAN!
SO, HOW'D IT GO?
.....
ざわ..
ざわ..
ざわ..

HE'S ON THAT SOFA OVER THERE.
FOR SOME REASON, HE'S JUST SITTING AROUND, NOW.

..HE DENIED A MATCH WITH SOMEONE AND WENT AWAY!
SOMEHOW OR ANOTHER, I DIDN'T ACTUALLY NEED TO DO ANYTHING...

MY TARGET MY PREY!
LOOKS LIKE I'VE FOUND HIM, AT LAST

SO HE'S RUNNING FREE NOW, IS HE..?
.....

第13話「秘策」
CHAPTER 13 - SECRET PLAN

I WON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!!

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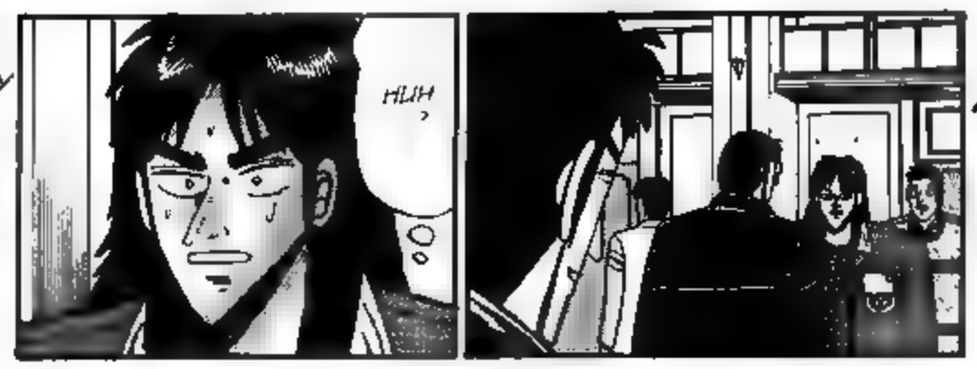
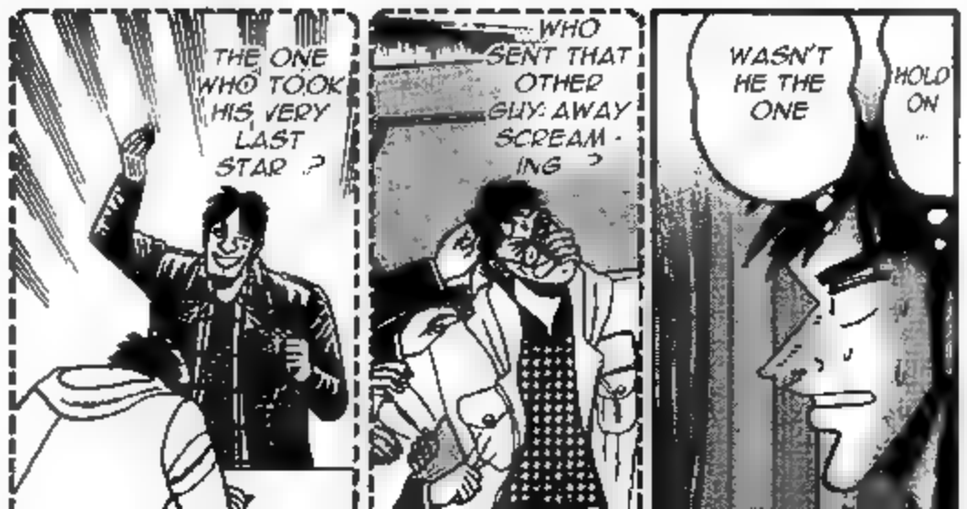
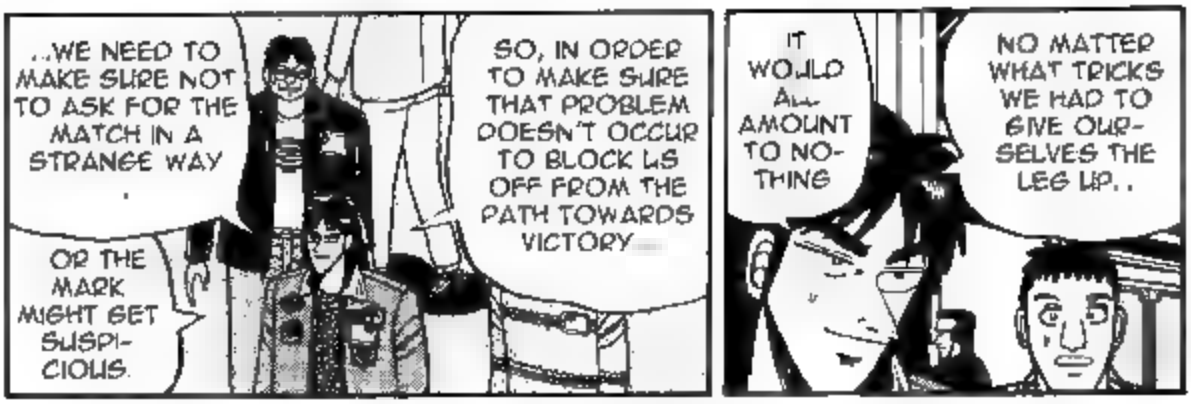




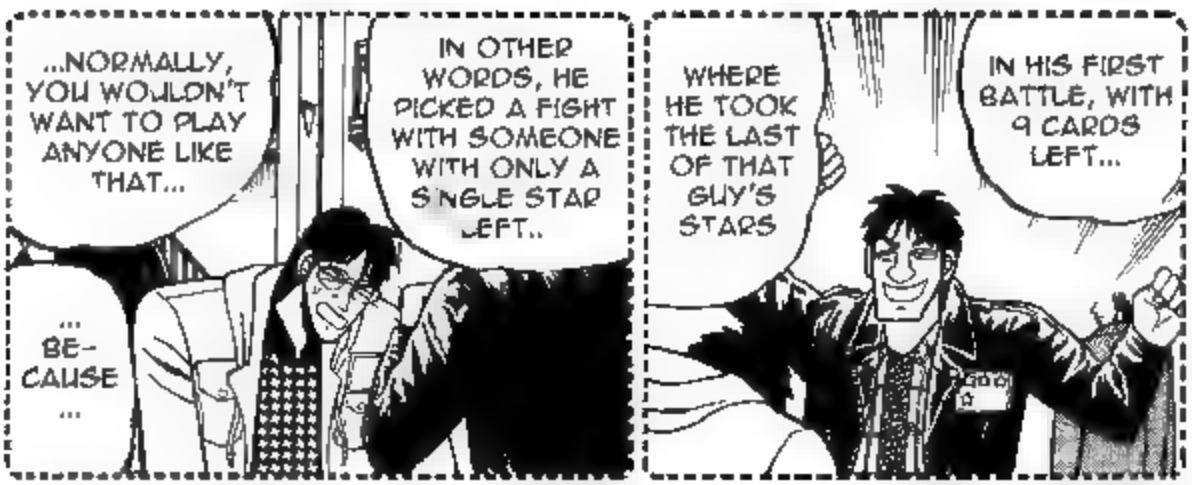
EVEN IF YOU'VE FOUND AN EASY TARGET, IT WON'T MEAN A THING UNLESS HE'S WILLING TO PLAY WITH YOU.
IN THIS GAME OF RESTRICTED ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS
HUH?
WELL, ISN'T THIS PERFECT?

WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO GET ANY OF HIS STARS FROM H.M, AND SO
DOESN'T MATTER IF HE WAS THE BEST TARGET WE COULD ASK FOR
..SO IF HE DENIED THE INVITATION TO FIGHT, THAT'D BE THE END OF T
I'VE GOT PARTNERS WHO HAVE AGREED TO SHARE MY WINS AND LOSSES


..WE NEED TO MAKE SURE NOT TO ASK FOR THE MATCH IN A STRANGE WAY
OR THE MARK MIGHT GET SUSPICIOUS.
SO, IN ORDER TO MAKE SURE THAT PROBLEM DOESN'T OCCUR TO BLOCK US OFF FROM THE PATH TOWARDS VICTORY
IT WOULD ALL AMOUNT TO NOTHING
NO MATTER WHAT TRICKS WE HAD TO GIVE OURSELVES THE LEG UP..

YEAH
IT'D BE A TOUGH FIGHT, FOR SURE, SINCE THE WHOLE STRATEGY HINGES ON THE FACT THAT HE AGREES TO FIGHT IN THE FIRST PLACE
IF THINGS GET COMPLICATED FROM THE START, WE'LL HAVE OUR HANDS FULL, TO SAY THE LEAST
IF THEY DO THAT, CONTINUING TO PESTER THEM TO ACCEPT OUR CHALLENGE WOULD JUST SEEM EVEN MORE STRANGE.

WHA.?
I BET HE'LL EVEN COME TO US TO PLAY.
.. THAT BARRIER HAS BEEN CLEARED RIGHT OUT OF THE GATE
BUT, IN HIS CASE
I SAW IT, TOO.
YOU MEAN ?

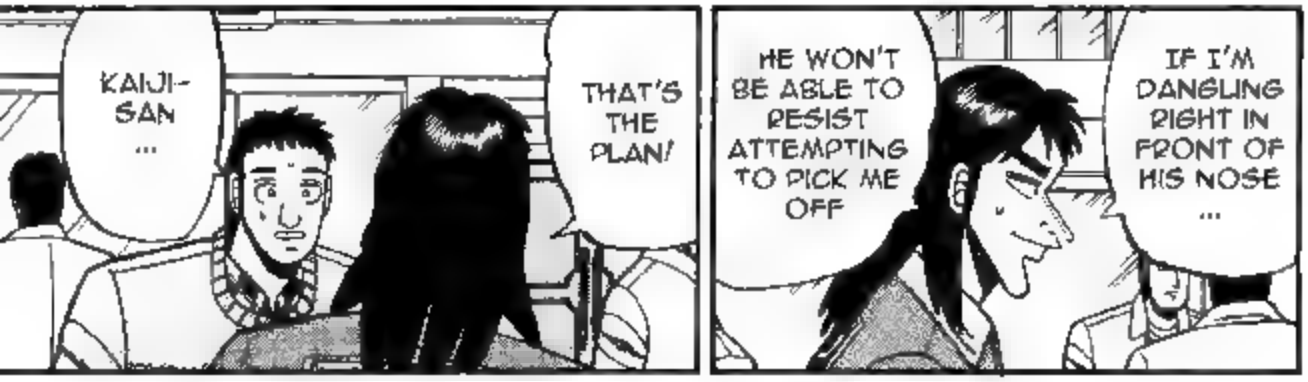

...NORMALLY, YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO PLAY ANYONE LIKE THAT...
IN OTHER WORDS, HE PICKED A FIGHT WITH SOMEONE WITH ONLY A SINGLE STAR LEFT..
... BE-CAUSE ...
WHERE HE TOOK THE LAST OF THAT GUY'S STARS
IN HIS FIRST BATTLE, WITH 9 CARDS LEFT...

ON THE CON-TRARY ...
HE DIDN'T SEEM TO FEEL AT ALL GUILTY FOR WHAT HE'D DONE ..
WHAT HE FELT ...
I WAS SUR-PRISED TO SEE HIS RE-ACTION ...
HOWEVER, RIGHT AF-TER HE WON ...
YEAH.!
IT'D SORT OF FEEL LIKE YOU KILLED THEM OFF YOURSELF, RIGHT?

..THE GUY OVER THERE IS THE ONE WHO HE TURNED DOWN A MATCH WITH ...
YOU'LL SEE WHAT I MEAN IF YOU LOOK ...
.. HE'S GOT FIVE STARS.
AND, ON TOP OF THAT LITTLE FACT .
BASED ON WHAT ANDOU DESCRIBED TO ME..
...WAS MORE LIKE PRIDE AND SUPERIORITY FOR HAVING WON.

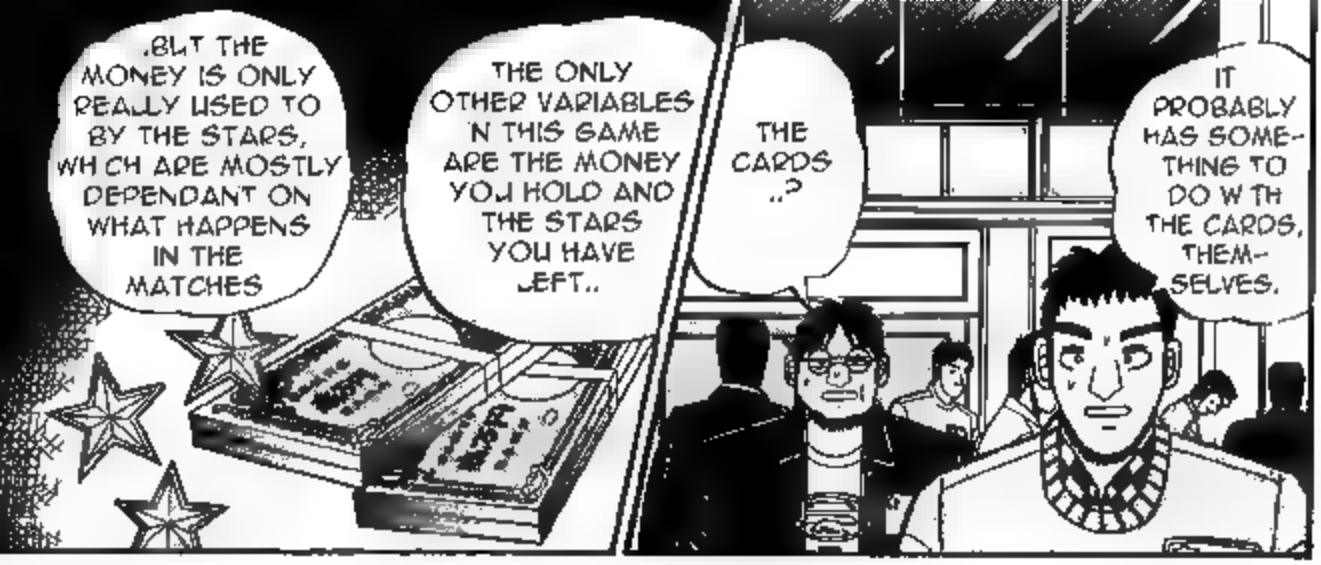
IN RESTRICTED ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS, THE PROCESS IS MADE EVEN SIMPLER.
..YOU JUST HAVE TO CHALLENGE PEOPLE WHO ONLY HAVE 1 OR 2 STARS LEFT.
. THE KIND OF "REVERSE BETTING" YOU SEE IN ROULETTE.
I'D GUESS HIS STRATEGY S SOMETHING LIKE
THAT IS PUTTING YOUR BET ON THE OPPOS TE COLOR FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE DOWN ON THEIR LUCK, THINK NG IT MIGHT IMPROVE YOUR ODDS.
AH !
THAT'S A LOT MORE STARS THAN WE'VE GOT, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?

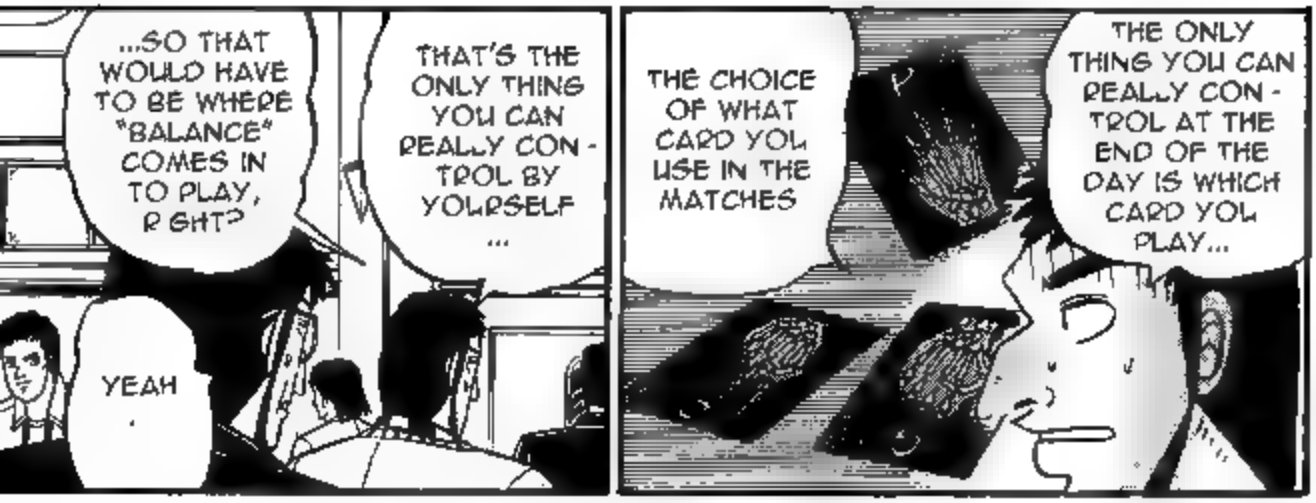
I'LL JUST WALK RIGHT BY HIM, AND START ACTING DEPRESSED.
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, I'VE GOT 1 STAR LEFT, TOO.
HE'S A SCAVENGER . A HYENA!
AND THEN REVELS IN BEING THE ONE TO TAKE THEIR LIFE
IT'S LIKE HE'S A HUNTER WHO ONLY PICKS OFF THE DEER WHO ARE WEAK OR WOUNDED..


KAIJI-SAN ...
THAT'S THE PLAN!
HE WON'T BE ABLE TO RESIST ATTEMPTING TO PICK ME OFF
IF I'M DANGLING RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIS NOSE ...

...IT'S OBVIOUS WHAT KIND OF GUY HE IS.
IF YOU TAKE A LOOK AT HOW CALM AND COMPOSED HE IS WHILE LOOKING AT HIS CARDS...
BY THE LOOKS OF IT, HE'S THE IDEAL OPPONENT FOR ME
HEH-HEH ...
JUST THE TYPE I WAS LOOKING FOR.
CLEARLY, HE'S THE TYPE WHO PUTS BALANCE FIRST.

WE'VE GOT ABOUT AN 80% SHOT AT TH S.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT T
WELL, I'M OFF, NOW
YEP
"BALANCE" .. BALANCE F RST .?
OKAY ...
I WONDER WHAT HE MEANT BY THAT ...
. . . .
I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE, BUT ..
I DON'T KNOW .
THE THING KAIJI-SAN SAID ABOUT "BALANCE" OR SOME-TH NG ..?


.BUT THE MONEY IS ONLY REALLY USED TO BY THE STARS, WH CH ARE MOSTLY DEPENDANT ON WHAT HAPPENS IN THE MATCHES
THE ONLY OTHER VARIABLES N THIS GAME ARE THE MONEY YOU HOLD AND THE STARS YOU HAVE LEFT..
THE CARDS ..?
IT PROBABLY HAS SOME-THING TO DO W TH THE CARDS, THEM-SELVES.


...SO THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE WHERE "BALANCE" COMES IN TO PLAY, R GHT?
THAT'S THE ONLY THING YOU CAN REALLY CON - TROL BY YOURSELF ...
YEAH .
THE CHOICE OF WHAT CARD YOU USE IN THE MATCHES
THE ONLY THING YOU CAN REALLY CON - TROL AT THE END OF THE DAY IS WHICH CARD YOU PLAY...

.....
Uo
THEN, UH ..

THERE'S NOTHING TO "BALANCE" WHEN IT COMES TO STARS AND MONEY.
AH, I SEE ...

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ..?
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING, FURUHATA - SAN. ?

WHAT ABOUT YOU, THEN?
HUH ?

.. AND PLAY WHATEVER CARD I PULLED OUT FIRST.
HUH . ?!
JUST REACH MY HAND INTO MY POCKET ...
ALL I DID WAS ...
ALL I'M ASKING S HOW YOU CAME TO BE LEFT WITH THOSE FOUR CARDS !
OH ...
IT'S IT'S JUST .. YOU WERE LEFT WITH 1 PAPER AND 3 SCISSORS, WEREN'T YOU.. ?

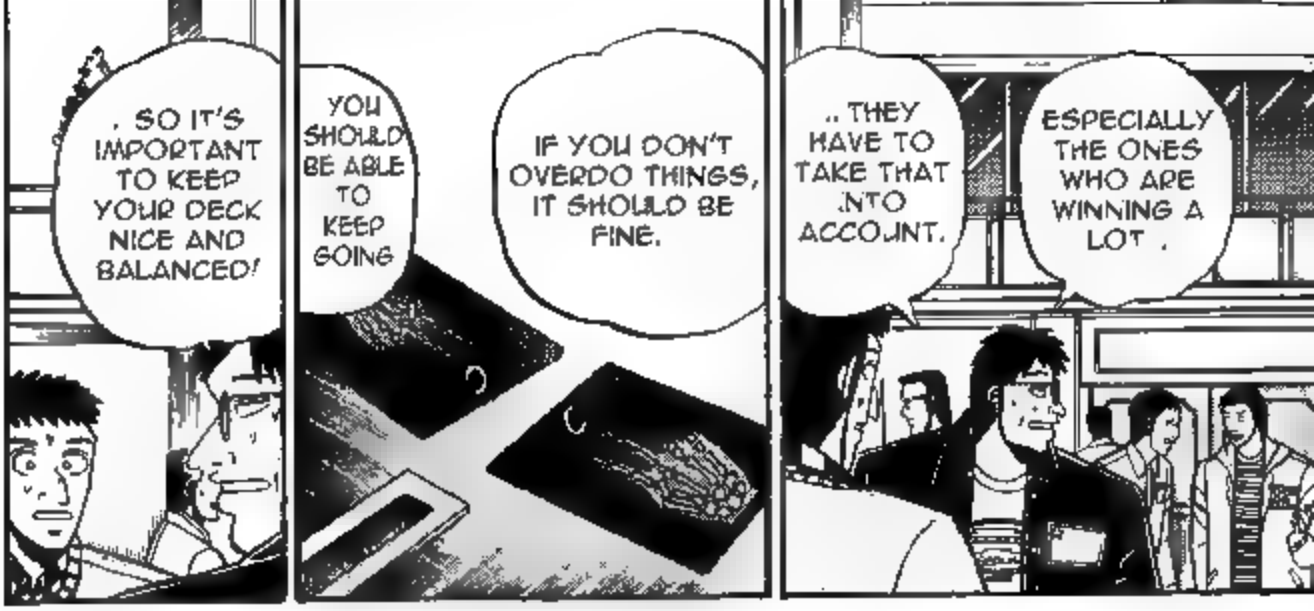
NOR- MALLY, YOU WOULDN'T THINK LIKE THAT ..!!
I MEAN, IT'S ONLY ROCK - PAPER - SCISSORS. SO IT DIDN'T REALLY.
I JUST DIDN'T THINK IT WAS WORTH THINKING ABOUT, OKAY?!
WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT ?!

WELL, YEAH !
"BALANCING" ?
HUH . ?
I MEAN, WEREN'T YOU AT ALL WORRIED ABOUT BALANCING OUT YOUR CARDS.. ?!

HOW SHOULD I PUT IT...
I MEAN, I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT THAT BIG THING, HERE.
AH, NO! JUST..
YOU... DO YOU KNOW ABOUT BALANCE ...?!

I MEAN.. HAVING JUST THESE 4 SCISSORS ISN'T REALLY A BALANCED DECK.!
..YOU'D USUALLY WANT TO AVOID THE SITUATION WE'RE IN RIGHT NOW, YOU KNOW.?
IT.. IT'S JUST ...

I'D JUST THINK THAT WOULD GO ALONG WITH COMMON SENSE, KINDA, YOU KNOW..?
I GUESS MAYBE 9 OUT OF 10 PLAYERS HERE WOULD BE THINKING ABOUT THAT WHEN THEY PLAY..?
IF YOU DON'T SPREAD THEM OUT TO THE VERY END ...
SEE ...
. YOU'LL BE LEFT WITH A LOT OF THE SAME CARDS AT SOME POINT!
SEOUL
NOR-MALLY..
OH ...
TO GIVE YOUR-SELF MORE OPTIONS FOR THE MAT-CHES!
..YOU'D SPREAD YOUR CHOICES OUT MORE..

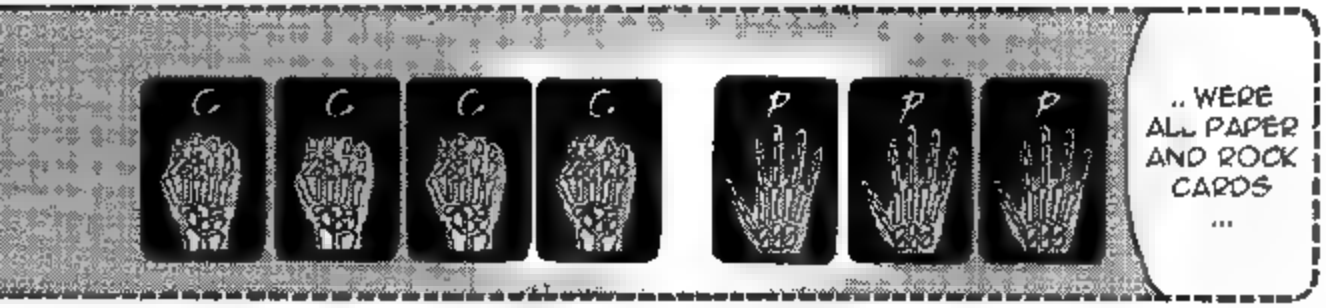

. SO IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP YOUR DECK NICE AND BALANCED!
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP GOING
IF YOU DON'T OVERDO THINGS, IT SHOULD BE FINE.
.. THEY HAVE TO TAKE THAT INTO ACCOUNT.
ESPECIALLY THE ONES WHO ARE WINNING A LOT .

..YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TOO MUCH OF A PROB - LEM.
IF YOU HAD A PRETTY EVEN AMOUNT OF EACH CARD .
BUT ...
AND EVERYONE GOT TO TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT YOU HAD..
I MEAN, IF THERE WAS, LIKE, SOME KIND OF ACCIDENT OR SOMETHING ...

ANDOU !
I GUESS ...
SO, UHH ...
.. YOU'D HAVE TO PREVENT OTHERS FROM SEEING THEM
IF YOUR DECK WAS MISSING ONE OR MORE TYPES .
THAT'S IT!
'CAUSE IF THEY D D SEE THEM, THE CHANCES OF YOU LOSING THE REST OF YOUR MATCHES WOULD BE REALLY HIGH!

THAT HIS TARGET WAS LOOKING VERY COMPOSED WHILE LOOKING AT HIS CARDS ...
AND THAT HE'S THE TYPE WHO PUTS BALANCE FIRST!
JUST BEFORE KAIJI-SAN LEFT, HE MENTIONED ...
..S PRO-BABLY JUST THAT!
WHAT KAIJI-SAN MEANT BACK THEN ...
?

IF HIS REMAINING 7 CARDS ...
AND THIN-KING ABOUT IT...
THAT'S WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT!
IT ALSO HAD TO DO WITH THE BALANCE OF HIS DECK ..
. ISN'T JUST FROM HAVING THE SAFETY OF HAVING 2 MORE STARS THAN HE NEEDS!
IN OTHER WORDS, HIS COM-POSURE ...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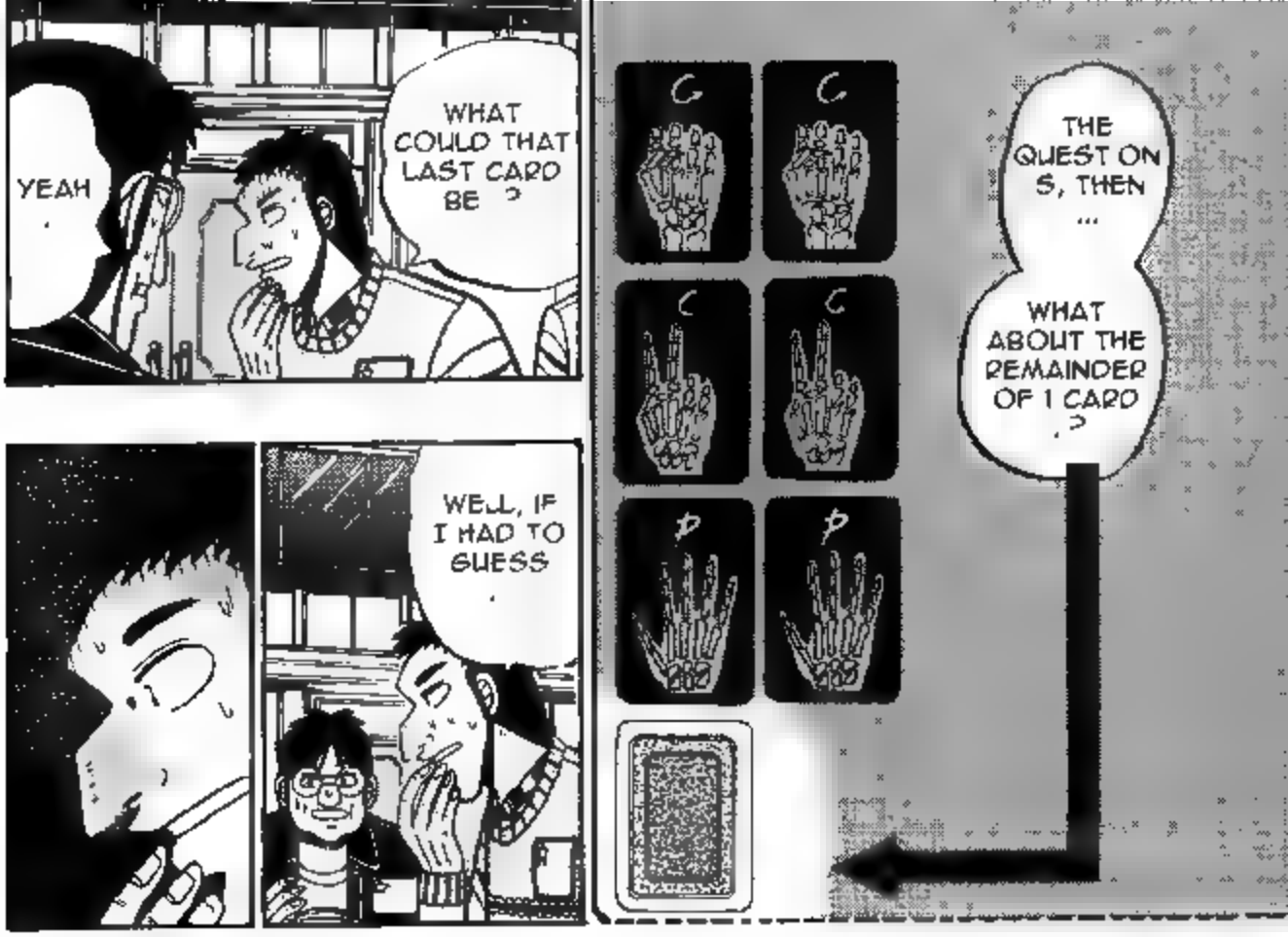
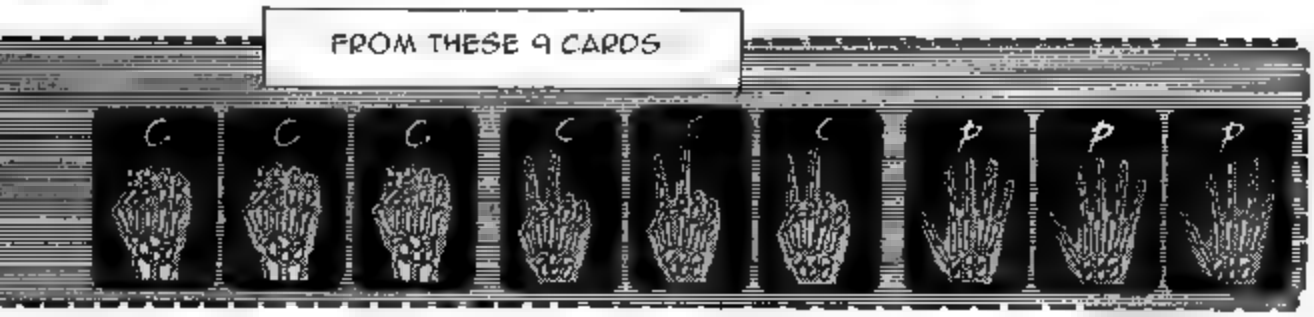
P
.. WERE ALL PAPER AND ROCK CARDS ...

I GET IT !
. KAIJ-SAN KNOWS THAT ALL THREE TYPES OF CARDS ARE EQUAL!
OUT OF THAT GUY'S LAST 7 CARDS ...
IN OTHER WORDS ...
..THERE'S NO WAY HE WOULD BE ABLE TO STAY AS COMPOSED AS HE IS NOW!


YEAH.
WHAT COULD THAT LAST CARD BE?
WELL, IF I HAD TO GUESS.
THE QUESTION S, THEN...
WHAT ABOUT THE REMAINDER OF 1 CARD?

IT'S OBVIOUS IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT...!
SO THAT'S HOW IT IS...!!
HUH?!
AH...!!

IN THE LAST TWO MATCHES WE SAW WITH H M
HE USED ROCK AND SCISSORS BACK-TO-BACK!
SO .
IT'S GOT TO BE PAPER!
. FROM THAT, IT'S CLEAR THAT HE THINKS ABOUT PLAY NG THEM THROUGH BALANCE!
AND MORE THAN THAT .


FROM THESE 9 CARDS

SO, THAT IN MIND ...
HUH ..?
THERE'S A REALLY GOOD CHANCE OF THAT BE NG THE CASE!
RIGHT, R GHT!!
. HE PLAYED SCISSORS AND ROCK ..
..LEAVING HIM WITH THESE SEVEN CARDS!

FROM THE SEVEN CARDS HE'S GOT LEFT, WHICH OF THEM IS THE MOST LIKELY TO GET PLAYED ..?
HE HAS A LEFT-OVER CARD, HERE
YEAH..!
THAT'S OBVIOUS, TOO...!
SO THE CHANCE OF HIM MAKING IT GO THIS WAY ARE VERY HIGH!
HE WOULD WANT TO AVOID BEING IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS ONE ..
THE CARD HE'LL PLAY AFTER THIS SHOULD BE PAPER!
IT'LL BE PA-PER!
AND SINCE IT IS ...

THE GUY WITH 7 CARDS
HE'S ON THE MOVE!
FURU-HATA-SAN...!
HE KNOWS FOR A FACT THAT HE CAN WIN!
AND KAIJI-SAN HAS THIS ALL FIGURED OUT!
AH..!
THIS IS ALL PART OF KAIJI'S PLAN..
HE'S CHAL-LENGING KAIJI-SAN!
THEY'RE GETTING UP..!!
THEY'RE GONNA DO T
.WHO ONLY TAR-GETS THE WEAK!
SPECIF-ICALLY AIMING FOR SOME-ONE..
CHECK!
EVERY-TH'NG UP TO HERE HAS BEEN A PART OF THIS STRA-TEGY!
YEAH!
STRATEGY
THEY'RE GONNA PLAY EACH OTHER, FURUHATA-SAN..!!

FAR E S AR FORCE

THIS IS ALL JUST A BASIC AS-SUMPTION ...!
THERE ISN'T ANY DEFINITE PROOF
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENS AFTER, YET !
BUT STILL ..

KAIJI-SAN ...!!
夢.13話 終.....
CHAPTER 13 - FIN...

AND NOW, ALL WE CAN DO IS HOPE THAT HE ACTUALLY PLAYS PAPER!
WE'VE DONE EVERYTHING THAT WE CAN DO TO HELP THIS PLAN ALONG...

KAIJI-SAN ...
CRUMBLE TO PIECES !

ALL OF OUR REA-SONING WILL FALL APART!
IF HE DECIDES TO DO ANYTHING OTHER THAN WHAT WE EXPECT HIM TO DO

第14話「勝負」
CHAPTER 14 - SHOWDOWN
TRANSLATED BY SONICKRAZY
CLEANED BY BIGGUMS
TYPESET BY SONICKRAZY

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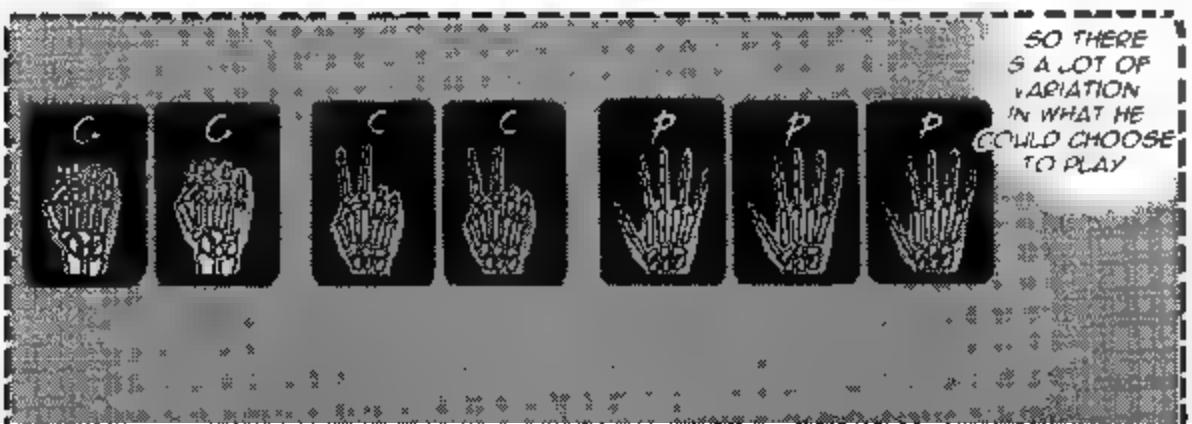
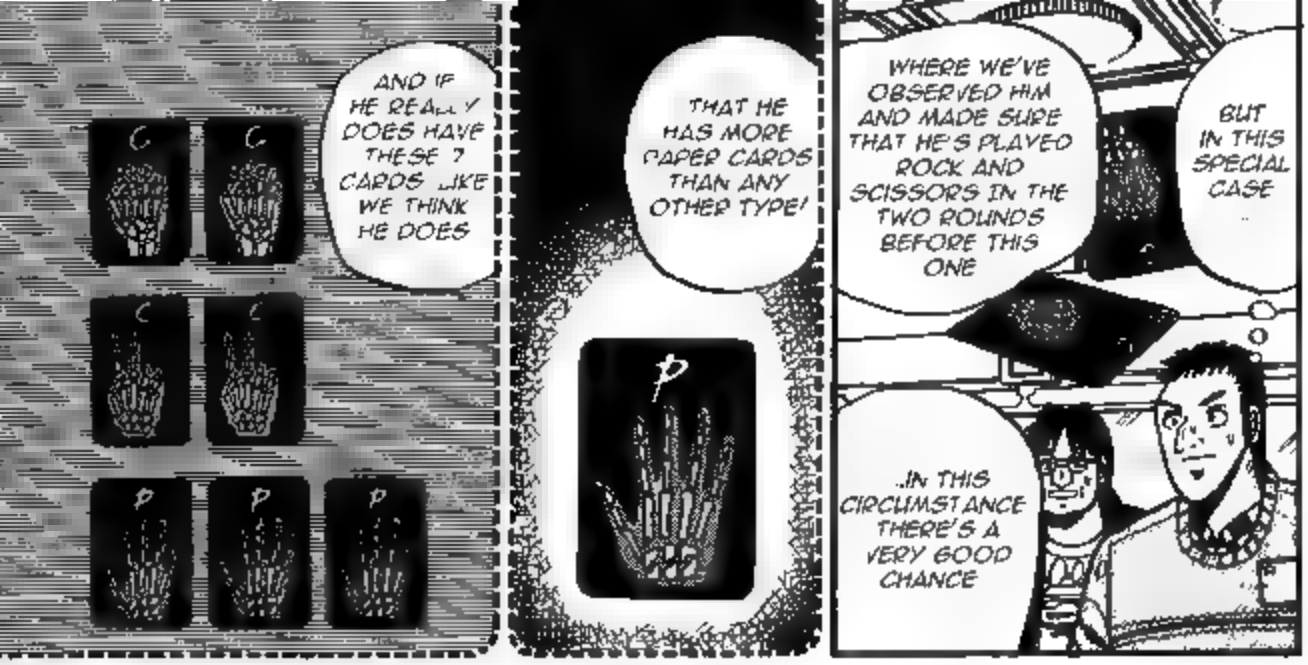
ざわ‥

HIS OPPONENT ISN'T AT ALL RESTRICTED TO JUST THAT ONE CARD
FIRST OF ALL
AND HE'S NOT EXACTLY DUMB, TO SAY THE LEAST
KAIJI-SAN'S STRATEGY IS ALL BASED ON AN ASSUMPTION
. . . . . .

THE OPPONENT HAS 7 CARDS LEFT TO CHOOSE FROM
OF COURSE, IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT
IT'S STILL ONLY A THEORY
AND WHILE KAIJI-SAN'S BALANCE THEORY SEEMS PRETTY SOLID
HE HAS TOTAL CONTROL OVER HIS CARD


G
G
C
C
P
P
P
SO THERE'S A LOT OF VARIATION IN WHAT HE COULD CHOOSE TO PLAY


AND IF HE REALLY DOES HAVE THESE 7 CARDS LIKE WE THINK HE DOES
C
C
C
C
P
P
P
THAT HE HAS MORE PAPER CARDS THAN ANY OTHER TYPE!
P
WHERE WE'VE OBSERVED HIM AND MADE SURE THAT HE'S PLAYED ROCK AND SCISSORS IN THE TWO ROUNDS BEFORE THIS ONE
BUT IN THIS SPECIAL CASE ..
..IN THIS CIRCUMSTANCE THERE'S A VERY GOOD CHANCE

THAT REASONING RELIES ON SEVERAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT HOW HE'LL THINK ..
IN OTHER WORDS ..
BUT STILL ..
THEN PAPER WOULD CERTAINLY BE THE MOST LIKELY CARD FOR HIM TO CHOOSE TO PLAY NEXT.
..AND IF HE REALLY DOES TAKE BALANCE INTO ACCOUNT WHEN CHOOSING A CARD TO PLAY

SET!
..THAT REASONING WOULD BE EASY TO TOPPLE OVER.
IT'S REALLY PAPER-THIN!
IF HE DECIDES TO DO ANY-THING ON A WHIM .
KAIJI-SAN..!!
FORCED TO BET OUR LIVES ON IT!
THAT FLIMSY REASONING IS OUR ONLY OPTION.
WE ARE LEFT .
BUT EVEN SO .

OPEN!!

AHHH HHH ..!!
KAIJI-SAN..!!

URGH ..!!

JUST LET US DO THIS ONE THING!!
JUST THIS ONE TIME
PLEASE GOD!!

KH ..!!

JUST LET US MAKE IT ACROSS THIS FRAGILE BRIDGE!!!

THE QUESTION IS HIS CARD!

BUT WE KNEW THAT ALREADY.

KAIJI-SAN'S CARD IS SCIS-SORS ...

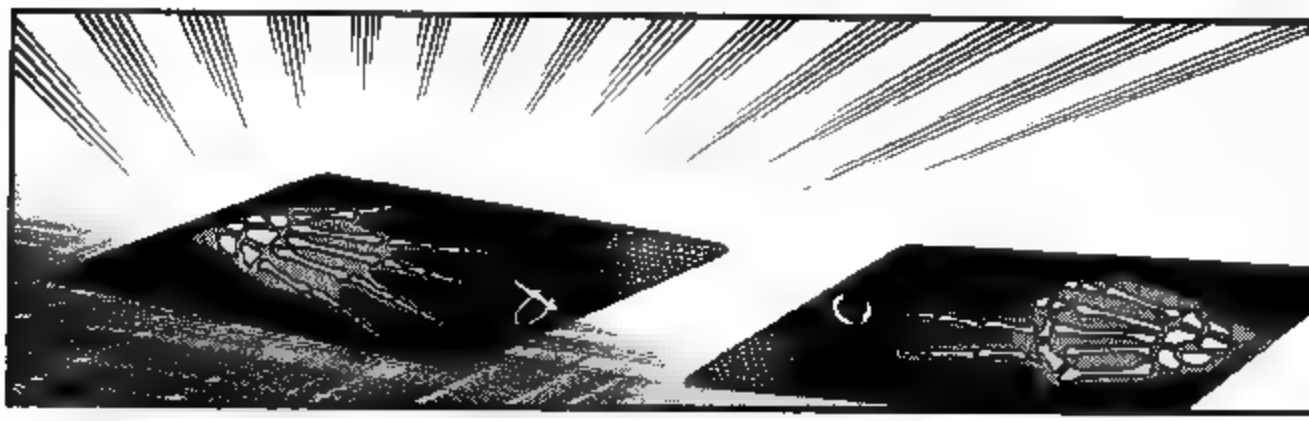
KH ''

ハハハ''...

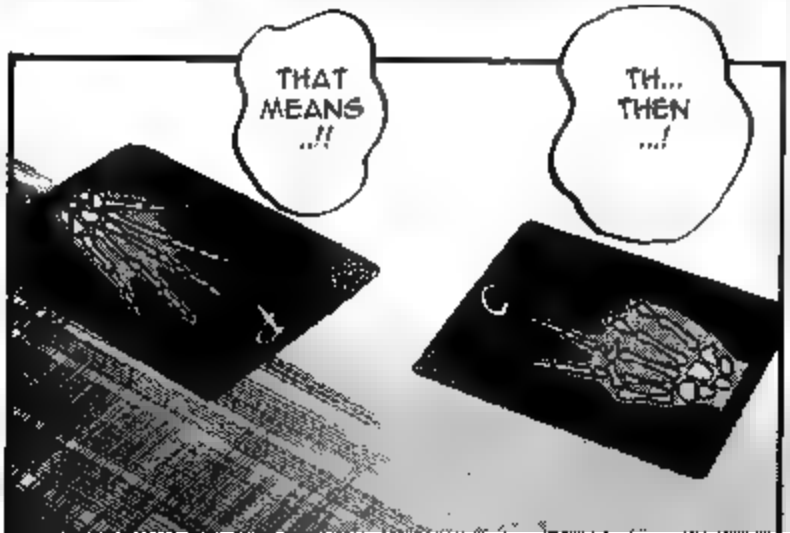
ハァ…
UHH…

HAH
!!
HUHHHHH..

KAIJI-SAN!!
DON'T TELL ME ...?!
YOU DIDN'T ..?!
KAIJI-SAN ...?!
HUH ?!



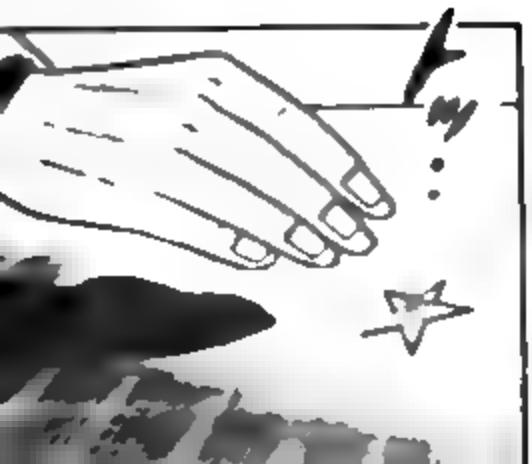
HUH ...?


THAT MEANS ..!!
TH... THEN ...!

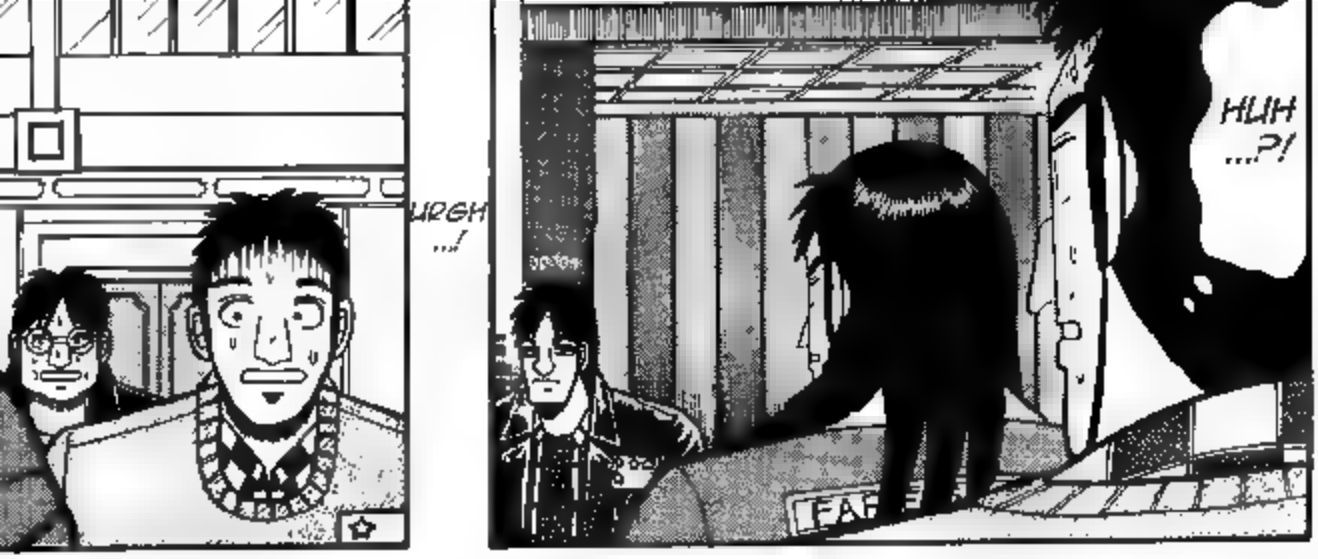
WE REALLY WON ...!!!!!
WE WON!!
YEEEEEEEEAAAAAAAHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!

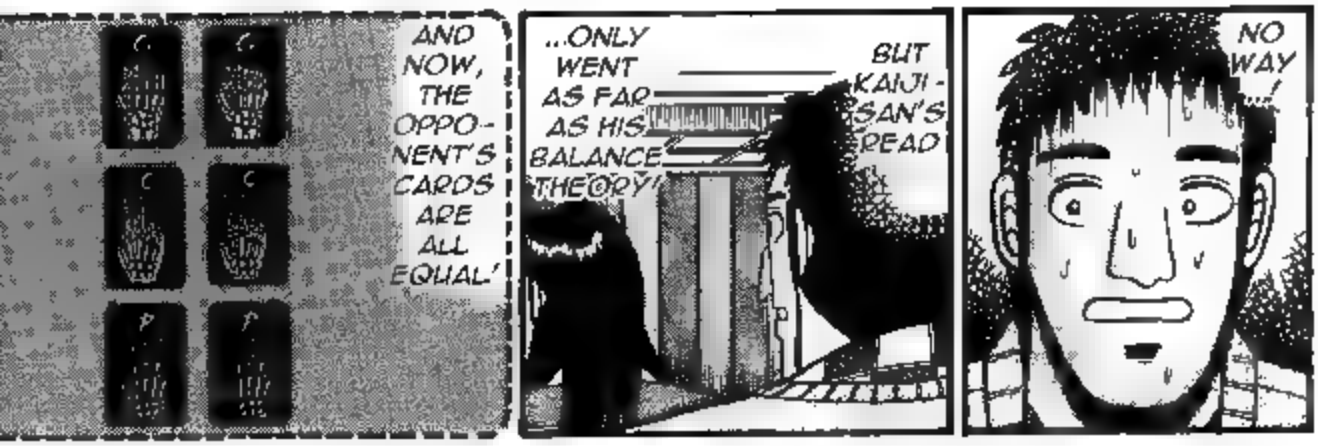
TCH
だわ..
だわ..

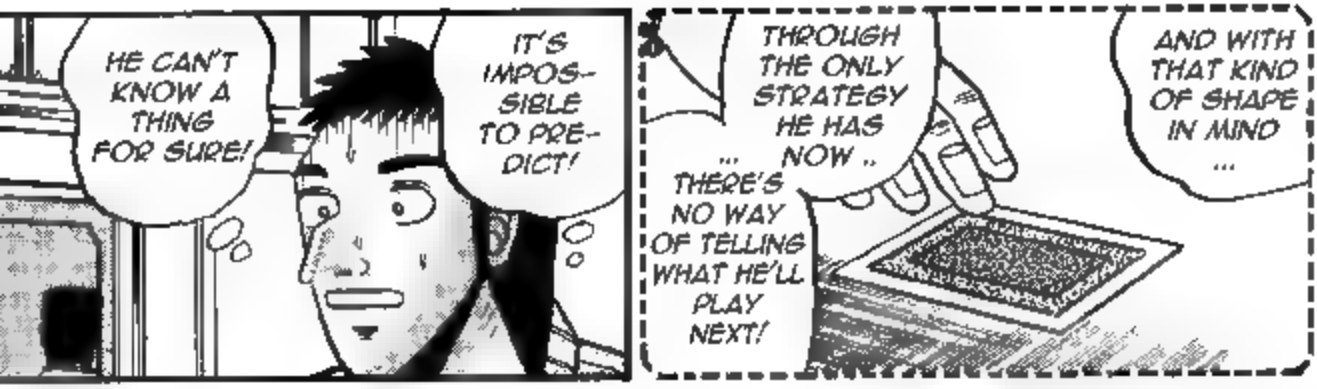
WE'VE BEEN FOR-GIVEN!
WE'VE MADE UP FOR THAT LOSS!
HEH-HEH



WHAT A BUNCH OF LOSERS
MAKING ALL THAT NOISE OVER ONE DAMN STAR
HOLD ON A SEC
GET BACK HERE.
WE'RE NOT DONE HERE, YET
HMMM?
KA- KAIJI-SAN?!
PLAY ME ONE MORE TIME!


URGH ...!
HUH ...?!


AND NOW, THE OPPO-NENT'S CARDS ARE ALL EQUAL!
...ONLY WENT AS FAR AS HIS BALANCE THEORY!
BUT KAIJI-SAN'S READ
NO WAY ...!


HE CAN'T KNOW A THING FOR SURE!
IT'S IMPOS-SIBLE TO PRE-DICT!
THROUGH THE ONLY STRATEGY HE HAS NOW ..
... THERE'S NO WAY OF TELLING WHAT HE'LL PLAY NEXT!
AND WITH THAT KIND OF SHAPE IN MIND ...

I'VE GOT TO TALK HIM OUT OF IT...!!
THERE'S NO WAY AROUND IT...
WE'D JUST BE GOING RIGHT BACK TO WHERE WE STAR-TED!
WE CAN'T EXPECT SUCH A LUCKY BREAK TO HAPPEN AGAIN!
...IS TO PROTECT THE STAR WE JUST GOT!
I MEAN, THE MOST IMPOR-TANT THING ...

K... KAIJI-SAN...!
KAIJI-SAN ...!
HUH?
PLEASE, CALM DOWN! YOU CAN'T DO THAT!
JUST TAKE A GOOD, DEEP BREATH!
.....

I MEAN, WE'VE ALREADY WON ONCE, WHICH IS E-NOUGH!
IT'S FINE IF WE WANT TO BACK OUT AND CUT OUR LOSSES ..!
YEAH...! STOP IT, HERE...!
.....

THIS WOULD BE YOUR SECOND TIME IN A ROW, WOULDN'T IT ..?

I MEAN, SINCE YOU JUST WON ...
YOU MIGHT BE THINKING OF PUSHING FOR-WARD WITH THE MOMEN-TUM YOU JUST GOT, BUT
SO WHAT?
YOU HAVE IT AL-READY

IF YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I'M DOING THIS ALREADY ...
. IT'S REALLY THE TWO OF YOU WHO NEED TO CALM DOWN.
THE THREE OF US STILL NEED TO GET WAY MORE STARS THAN WE ALREADY HAVE
WITHOUT 5 OR 6 MORE STARS, WE'LL BE UNABLE TO MAKE IT OUT ALIVE

IF WE WIN, WE KEEP GOING!
WHAT WILL WE DO IF WE LOSE THE MOMENTUM THAT WE HAVE NOW?!
WE'RE AT A POINT WHERE WE CAN'T JUST DROP BACK WITH A SINGLE FAVORABLE WIN ...
SO WE'RE DOING JUST THAT!
THAT'S JUST OBVIOUS ...
I'LL WIN!
IT'S FINE! TRUST ME!
KAIJI-SAN ...?!
OH-HOHH ...
.....
I'LL SCORE US ANOTHER STAR, FOR SURE!
.....
FORCE

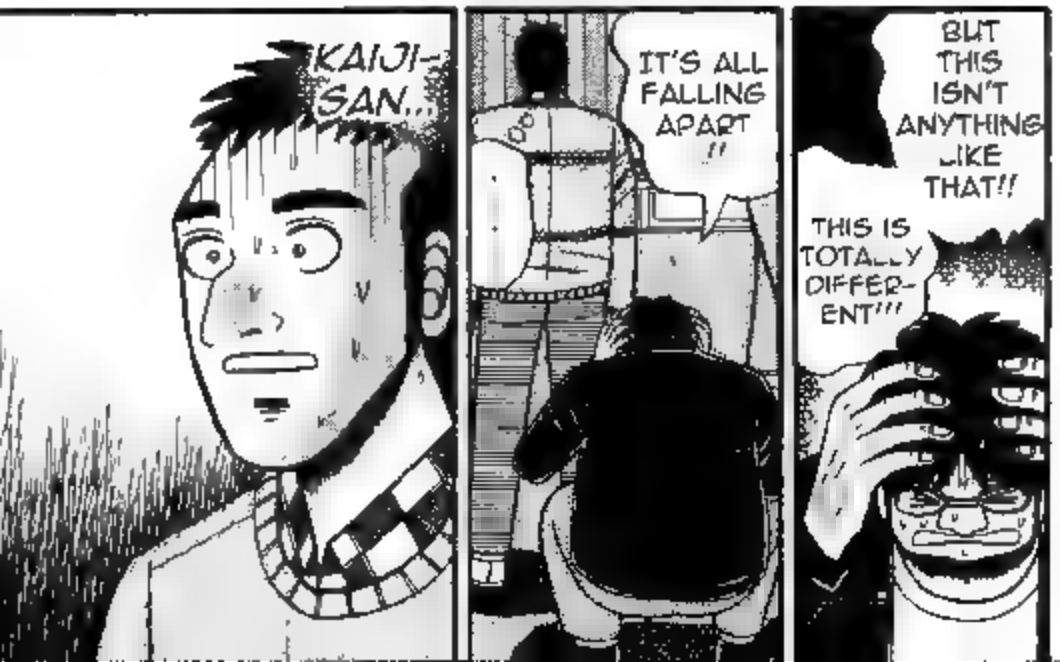
I'LL BET .
I CAN'T IMAGINE THEY'D BE CLOSE FRIENDS, CERTAINLY NOT YET
SEEMS LIKE THEY'RE JUST ACQUAIN-TANCES
THESE THREE .
NOT EXACTLY A UNIFIED FORCE
EAST ASIAN AIR FORCE
SO, AS A LAST RESORT .
..THEY TRIED TO FIND A WAY OUT, TO-GETHER.
THEY WERE EACH DECI-MATED BY THE COM-PETITION AND LEFT WITH ONE STAR .
THAT'S JUST THE KIND OF TRASH THEY ARE
NOT A SINGLE ONE OF THEM KNOWS HOW TO FIGHT
THEY KNOW IT'S HOPELESS .
HNN-HN-HN-HN ...
. THEY'VE BANDED TOGETHER AS A TRIO OF LOSERS WITHOUT ANY LUCK ON THEIR SIDE!
EVEN NOW, IN THE FIGHT OF THEIR PATHETIC LIVES .
ALL RIGHT
WILL YOU PLAY ME OR NOT?
SO, WHAT DO YOU SAY?

ALL RIGHT
KAIJI-SAN.
I ACCEPT YOUR CHAL-LENGE!
HNN-HN-HN...
...WINNING TWICE IN A ROW IS IM-POS-SIBLE!
FOR USELESS GARBAGE LIKE YOU
...YOU CAN'T EXPECT LUCK LIKE THAT TO COME ALONG MORE THAN ONCE!
..BUT SORRY TO BE THE ONE TO BREAK IT TO YOU.
AND YOU SAY THAT YOU CAN RIDE THAT MO-MENTUM TO ANO-THER
YOU'VE HAD ONE WIN..
CAN'T EVEN READ THE FLOW!
HOPE-LESS IDIOTS
YOU WON'T BE GOING ANY-WHERE!
HNN-HN-HN.

I'LL SQUISH YOU LIKE A BUG!

第14話〈終〉
CHAPTER 14 — FIN...

ADAMANTLY RUSHING FORWARD INTO A SECOND MATCH...!



第15話「凶行」
CHAPTER 15 - VIOLENCE

TRANSLATED BY SONICKRAZY
CLEANED BY BIGGUMS
TYPESET BY KAZUHIKO

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FAR EAST AIR FORCE

...WE WON'T BE ABLE TO GET ALL THE STARS WE NEED.

JUST LIKE WHAT KAIJI-SAN SAID..

.OUR REASONING CAN ONLY GET US THAT ONE STAR

EVEN IF WE WANT TO PLAN EVERY-THING OUT

I KNOW JUST WHAT YOU MEAN...

.....

.....

AHHH ...!

SET!!

THAT IS.

IF WE CAN'T FIND A BOOST OF LUCK, WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT..

...WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE A CHANCE

AT THE END OF THE DAY...

AT SOME POINT...

...I UNDERSTAND WHAT KAIJI-SAN WAS TRYING TO TELL US

BUT AT THE SAME TIME.

IF WE CAN'T FLY UP HIGH, WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT!

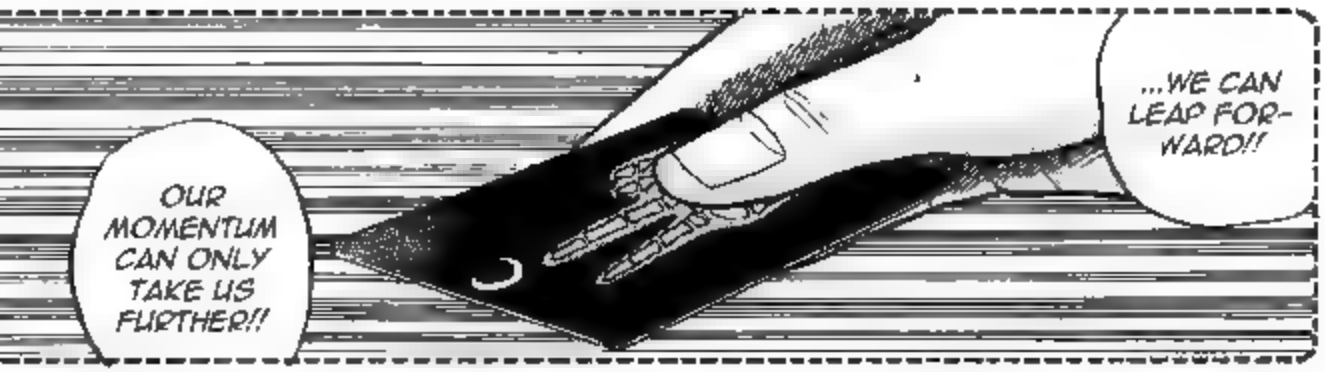
WITH ONLY REASON, WE'LL NEVER GET THE 9 STARS WE NEED!

REASON CAN'T DO EVERYTHING FOR US!

IF WE KEEP TAKING EVERYTHING SLOWLY AND METHOD-ICALLY
...GET-TING 9 STARS WILL BE A IMPOS-SIBLE TASK!

THE ALTERNATIVE WOULD TAKE TOO MUCH TIME AND EFFORT.
AND KAIJI-SAN HAD THAT IN MIND WHEN HE SUGESTED THIS BATTLE!

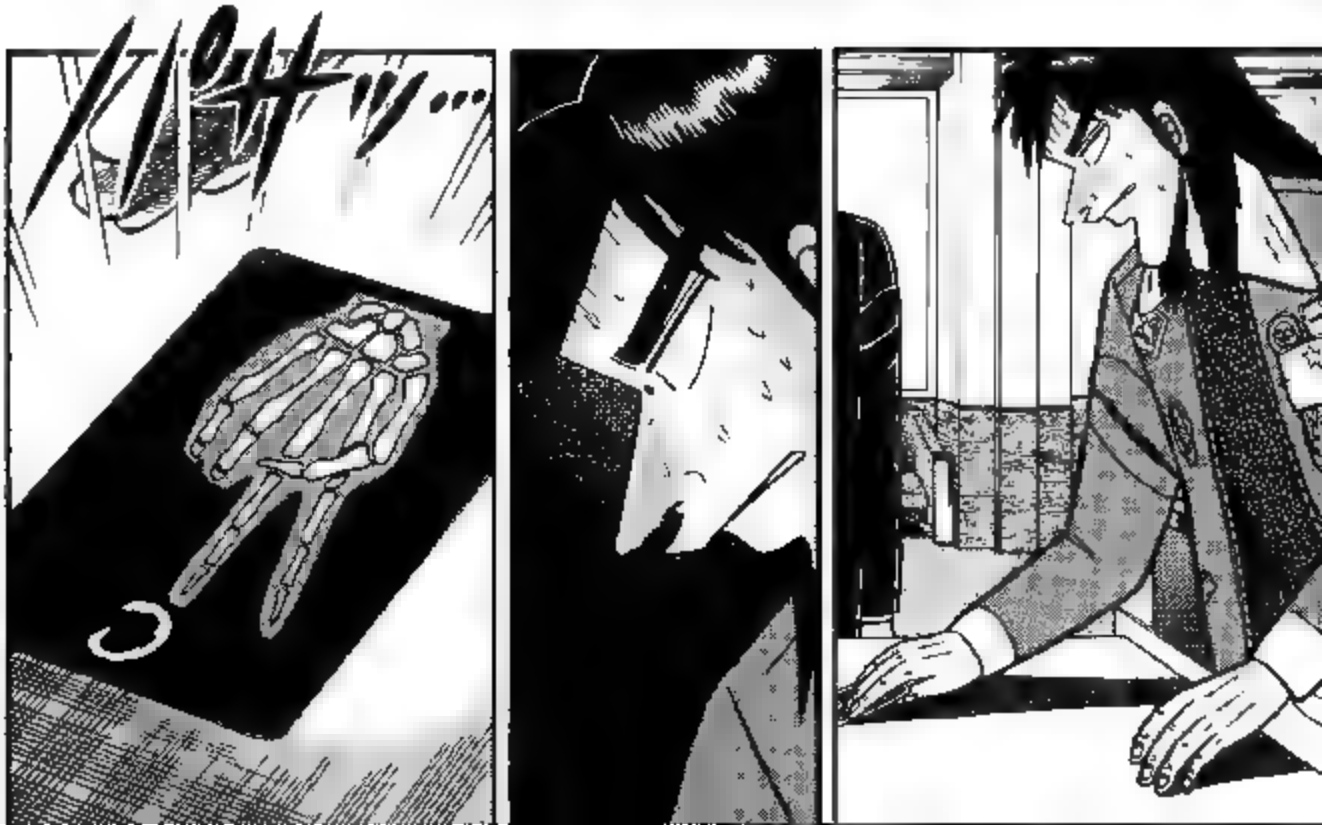
WE HAVE TO BREAK PAST REASON!
OUR LOSING STREAK IS LIKE A BARRIER
...WE HAVE TO HOPE FOR A GUST OF WIND TO CARRY US PAST IT!
IF WE CAN OPEN A PATH THROUGH THAT BARRIER...
...AND KEEP RIDING THE WIND OUT OF THE OPENING...
THEN AFTERWARDS


...WE CAN LEAP FORWARD!!
OUR MOMENTUM CAN ONLY TAKE US FURTHER!!

WE'LL WIN!
AND WIN!!
WE'LL GET THAT BALL ROLLING!!
AND THAT'S WHY.

THERE'S NO WAY FOR US TO SURVIVE!!
UNLESS WE COUNT ON MIRACULOUS CONSECUTIVE WINS...

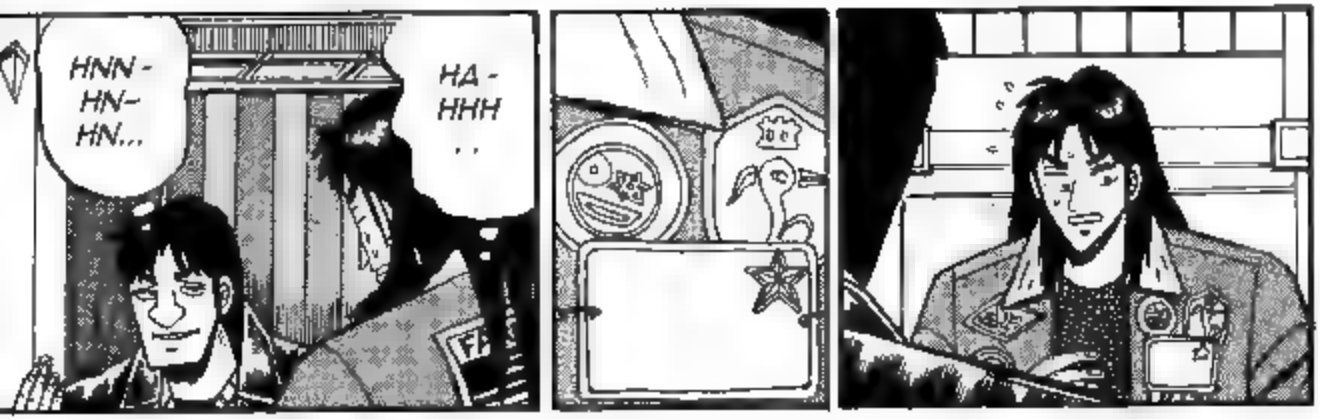
OPEN!!


Kleff...

GIVE US ONE MORE PAPER!!
JUST ONE MORE...
URGH ...!!
PLEASE !

AH...!
TCH
NGH

HNN-HN-HN
I KNEW WE'D LOSE AT THE RATE WE WERE GOING...
THIS IS JUST WHAT I SAID WOULD HAPPEN!
GAHHHH!!


HNN-HN-HN...
HA-HHH..

HUH...?
KAIJI-SAN.. LET'S GO.
.....
THIS IS ONLY NATURAL
IDIOT..
THAT ONE WIN YOU HAD WAS JUST LUCK OF THE DRAW

HNN-HN-HN
C'MON ...
YEAH
HOW D'YOU GET TO BE AS DUMB AS THEM.
HON-EST-LY

HEY!
THAT MEANS...
WAIT A MINUTE
YOU'RE GONNA PLAY ME AGAIN.
WHERE D'YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?
WHAT?
HUH ...?

ごお…

ごお…

PLAY. ME. AGAIN.

WE DON'T NEED TO FIGHT WITH HIM

YEAH ..

KAIJI-SAN, LET'S GO

.I EXPECT YOU TO ACCEPT MINE

SO, NOW THAT WE'VE REVERSED ROLES

THAT'S WHY YOU'LL ALWAYS BE USELESS!

KH

.....

I'M NOT TALKING TO YOU.

YOU KNOW WE CAN'T DO THAT!!

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE SAYING ?!

YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING...!

..AND ACCEPTED YOUR OFFER FOR A SECOND MATCH.

I LISTENED TO YOUR REQUEST EARLIER ...

SO, KAIJI-SAN.

.....

IT'S YOU I WANT TO SPEAK WITH

KAIJI-SAN, LISTEN TO ME...

USELESS GARBAGE THAT CAN'T DECIDE ANYTHING FOR YOURSELVES!!

CAN'T GET YOU ANY MORE STARS!
JUST WIMPING OUT AND SITTING AROUND

COME ON

KAIJI-SAN...

ANYONE CAN SEE HE'S JUST MAKING FUN OF YOU!!
HE'S JUST TRYING TO INTIMIDATE YOU...
IT'S GETTING UGLY

BE IT NOW OR LATER, YOU HAVE TO FIGHT AND WIN!!
THE FACT IS .

SO COME ON, KAIJI!!

I WON'T GET MORE STARS OUT OF NOWHERE.
HE'S EXACTLY RIGHT
HUH ...?
I WON'T BACK DOWN!
NO ...
SO LET'S JUST GET OUT OF HERE, KAIJI-SAN!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ?!
HO... HOLD ON, NOW, KAIJI-SAN!!
KAIJI-SAN .?
YOU'VE ONLY GOT ONE STAR LEFT...!
ARE YOU TWO IDIOTS. .?
GIVE ME A BREAK ...!

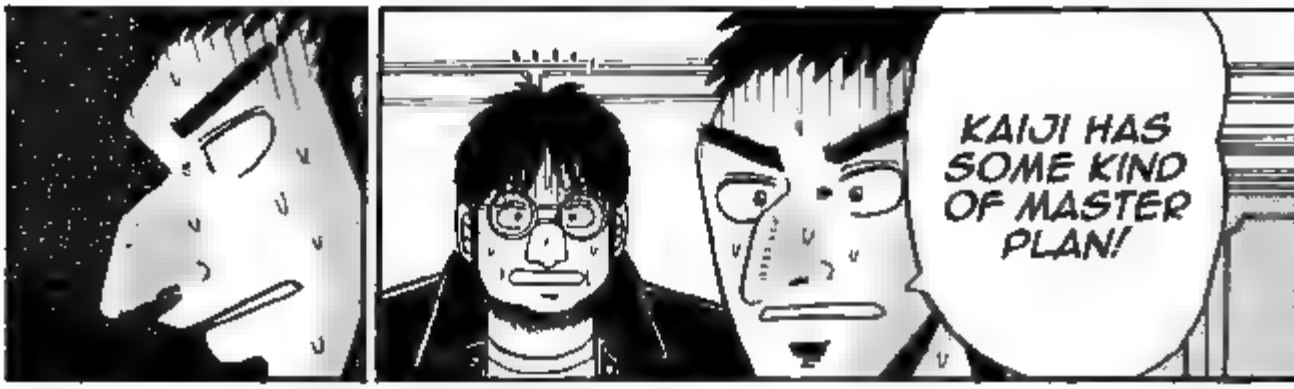
WHY CAN'T YOU SEE THAT I'M ACTING ?!
WHY CAN'T YOU SEE I WAS JUST BAITING HIM. ?
BUT THERE WAS A REASON FOR IT!
IT'S TRUE I LOST IN THE SECOND MATCH
WHA...?
SHH!!
WHAA?!

JUST NOW, THE FISH BIT ONTO OUR BAIT!
AHH ...!
BE QUIET!
ALL WE NEED TO DO NOW
...IS REEL THAT FISH IN!!
AIR FORCE

ポーン...
KAI-JI-SAN ...
I DON'T WANT HIM TO FIGURE OUT WHAT I'M DOING!
THAT'S WHY I'M PUTTING ON AN ACT ..

.....
HUHHH ...?!
...
I'LL WIN TWICE IN A ROW, NOW
DON'T WORRY GUYS

I DON'T GET IT EITHER, BUT
IT SEEMS ...
.....
FURU-HATA-SAN...!!
WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME?!
WHA... WHAT THE... WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?!


KAIJI HAS SOME KIND OF MASTER PLAN!

A MASTER PLAN HE CAN USE TO WIN TWICE IN A ROW!!
第15話 終
CHAPTER 15 - FIN

2 CONSECUTIVE WINS...?!

..HE MUST THINK THE OPPONENT WILL PLAY PAPER!
...SINCE WE'RE FORCED TO USE NOTHING BUT SCISSORS
IF I HAD TO GUESS...
WHAT'S GOING ON, HERE...?

第16話「盲点」

CHAPTER 16 - BLIND SPOT

TRANSLATED BY SONICKRAZY
CLEANDED BY BIGGUMS
TYPESETING BY KAZUHIKO

ざわ・・

FAR EAST AIR FORCE

ざわ・・

...HE MUST HAVE SOME WAY TO GET HIM TO PLAY PAPER TWICE!

...HE WOULD NOT PLAY THE SAME CARD TWICE.

SO UNLESS HE HAD A VERY STRONG SUSPICION THAT IT WOULD BENEFIT HIM...

IN OTHER WORDS

...IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE THAT HE'D PLAY PAPER TWICE IN A ROW

FOR A GUY WHO WE'VE SEEN SPREAD OUT HIS CARD CHOICES SO EVENLY THROUGH THE GAME. .

I MEAN, HE...

THAT GUY WILL NEVER PLAY THE WAY WE WANT HIM TO!!

.....

BUT THERE IS NO WAY!!

...THAT WOULD LEAD HIM TO THINK PAPER WOULD BE SAFE.

...SOME KIND OF IDEA...

OR, PERHAPS ...

A CLUE THAT WOULD LEAD HIM TO BE SURE KAIJI-SAN WOULD PLAY ROCK.

...IT WOULD BE BECAUSE HE HAD SOME SORT OF CLUE.

...IF HE WERE TO PLAY PAPER NOW...

YEAH..

...THAT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE, FURUHATA-SAN!!

TO PLAY HIS CARDS SO BIASED TO ONE SIDE...

DIDN'T WE PICK HIM OUT BECAUSE HE LIKED TO BALANCE HIS CARDS?!

...HE'D SOMEHOW FEEL SURE THAT KAIJI-SAN WOULDN'T PLAY SCIS-SORS
WHICH WOULD MEAN
FURU-HATA-SAN?
HUH H.!
HUH
HUH ...!!
WHAT AN IDEA...! THEN THAT WOULD MEAN...!!
HEY WHAT'S GOING ON.?

...IT'S THE OTHER WAY AROUND!!

ANDOU
FURU-HATA-SAN..?

IS BEING USED AGA-NST HIM!!
THAT GUY'S BALANCE THEORY

.....

...THAT GUY WILL REALLY PICK PAPER TWICE .!
I MEAN ...

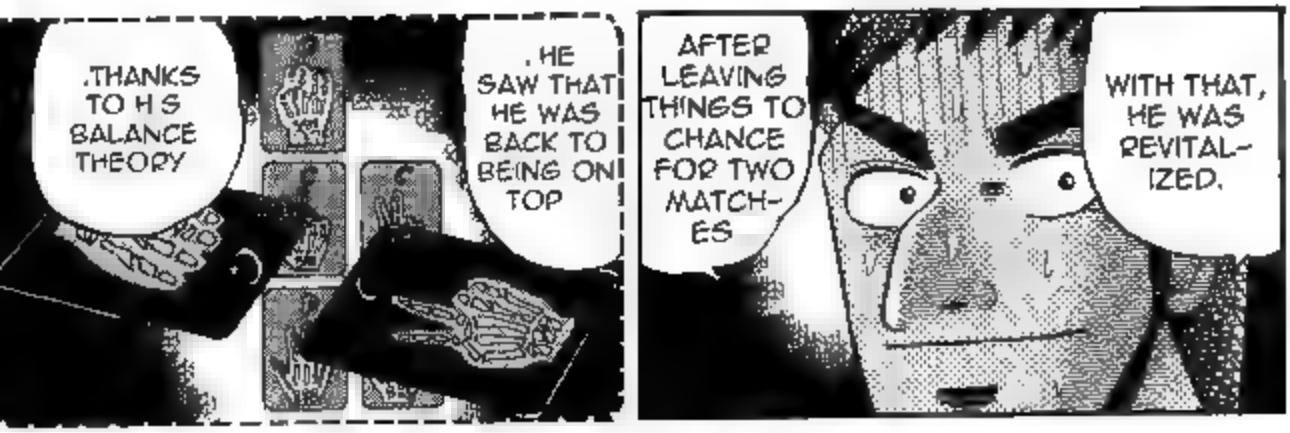
WHA ...?
KAIJI-SAN WILL WIN...!

..THAT'S HOW HE GOT ALL OF HIS STARS
...UNTIL NOW, THAT GUY'S ALWAYS KEPT BALANCE IN MIND DURING HIS MATCHES.
WELL, YOU SEE..
HUH ...?!?!

JUST LIKE WE THOU GHT.
..PAPER
HE WENT WITH THE CHOICE THAT WOULD GIVE HIM AN EVEN NUMBER OF EVERY CARD
DURING HIS FIRST MATCH WITH KAIJI-SAN

HE JUST PICKED ROCK AND LEFT IT TO CHANCE.
BALANCE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.
IN THAT SITUATION, ANY CARD HE CHOSE WOULD'VE BEEN THE SAME
...HIS CARDS WERE BACK TO BEING EVEN.
IN THE SECOND MATCH.

. HE WENT INTO A THIRD
AND THEN, AFTER BOUNCING BACK IN BOTH OF THE 2 MATCHES
. NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT
THAT MADE HIM FEEL BETTER .
.. SO HIS STARS WERE BACK TO WHERE THEY WERE BEFORE.
HE WON THAT MATCH

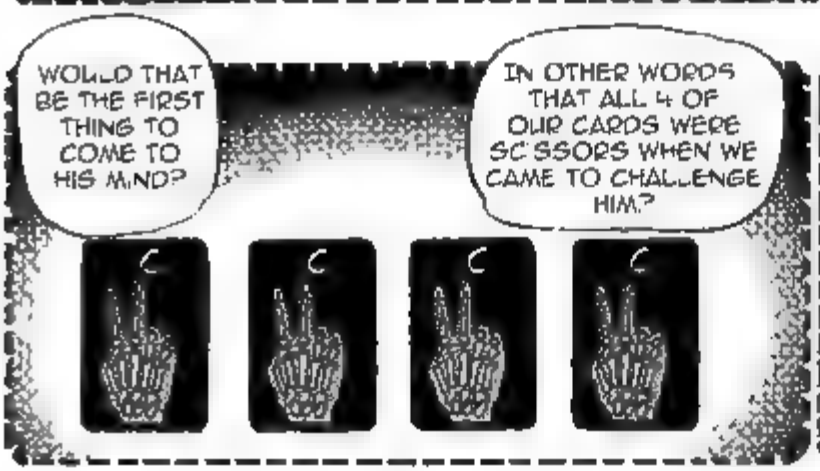

.THANKS TO H S BALANCE THEORY
. HE SAW THAT HE WAS BACK TO BEING ON TOP
AFTER LEAVING THINGS TO CHANCE FOR TWO MATCH-ES
WITH THAT, HE WAS REVITAL-IZED.

ONCE HE SAW THAT HE'D MADE A WIN OF HIS OWN
HE GOT REVITAL-IZED FOR SURE.
Y E A H
. REVITAL-IZED. .?
. . . . .
AND WITH THAT, HE STUBBORNLY CHALLENGED KAIJI-SAN TO YET ANOTHER MATCH
...HE CAME UP WITH A COUNTER ATTACK ..

HE SAW THAT KAIJI-SAN HAD PLAYED SCISSORS IN BOTH OF THEIR MATCHES.
WELL, THINK ABOUT IT.

HEH-HEH.
WHA ...?

...WHAT DO YOU THINK HE FIGURED OUT?
AND ONCE HE SAW THE TWO SCISSORS IN A ROW..


WOULD THAT BE THE FIRST THING TO COME TO HIS MIND?
IN OTHER WORDS THAT ALL 4 OF OUR CARDS WERE SCISSORS WHEN WE CAME TO CHALLENGE HIM?

DID HE THINK OUR 2 CARDS LEFT WERE SCISSORS?

FOR A GUY LIKE HIM, THAT DECK WOULD BE BEYOND HIS IMAGI-NAT ON
THERE'S NOTHING TO CON-SIDER

YOU SEE?
AH ...!

THAT GUY'S REASONING IS TOTALLY BASED ON BALANCE.

.SO US HAVING NO ROCKS OR PAPERS, BUT NSTEAD ENTIRELY SCISSORS.

.. WOULDN'T EVEN CROSS HIS MIND!

HE USED H S OWN THEORIES TO DO IT!

THAT SAID, WHEN HE IMAG NED THE CARDS KAIJI-SAN HAD LEFT.

SPECIF- CALLY, HIS TR ED- AND-TRUE BALANCE THEORY!

FOR KAIJI-SAN'S DECK TO BE BALANCED .

IT WOULD NEED TO HAVE ROCK AND PAPER

.NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT

THAT IS, OUT OF THE 4 CARDS HE HAD AT THE START

THIS SHAPE IS THE ONLY ONE THAT COULD POSS BLY BE BALANCED.

HAVING 3 OR MORE SC S- SORS WOULD BE IMPOS- S BLE

SO, WITH THAT IN MIND.

C P C C

GOING INTO A THIRD MATCH ..

IF HE PLAYED PAPER, THAT WOULD MEAN HE COULDN'T LOSE!

. TO DECIDE THAT HE COULDN'T LOSE, FOR HIMSELF!

IN RESTRICTED ROCK PAPER- SCISSORS WHERE LEAVING THINGS TO CHANCE IS THE NORM

..FINDING AN OPPO- NENT YOU CAN'T LOSE AGAINST ISN'T SOME- THING YOU SEE TOO OFTEN!

AND THAT'S WHY THAT GUY JUMPED AT THE CHANCE TO HAVE KAIJI-SAN AS HIS OPPONENT!

AND, SINCE HE CHALLENGED KAIJI TO AN- OTHER MATCH HIMSELF .

THAT MEANS HE FOLLOWED THAT L NE OF REASONING .

KANJI-SAN KNEW THAT
..SO HE WAITED UNTIL HIS OPPONENT WAS IN THAT MINDSET ..
..AND SPRUNG HIS TRAP!
THAT S, LETTING THE OPPONENT CHALLENGE HIM, HIM-SELF!
HE SET UP THE CONDI-TIONS
.. BUT LET H S OPPONENT DO THE CHALLENGING!
CHECK!
AH...!
HE WA-IT-ED!
FOR THE OP-PO-NENT TO CHA-LLE-GE HIM !
UNTIL THE OP-PONENT
.. WAL KED STRAI GHT INTO THE QUICK SAND BY HIM-SELF

HIS DECISION TO WAIT FOR HIS OPPONENT WAS A VERY FINE PLAY..!
THIS WAS BRIL-LIANT ...
SET!
...HE DUCKED HIS HEAD DOWN, AND WAITED!!
...MADE IT SO HE WOULDN'T EVEN THINK TWICE ABOUT IT.
..IT LET HIM THINK HE WAS BEING CLEVER !
LETT-ING HIM CHAL-LENGE US HIM-SELF.
DIE, YOU SCUM!
HNN-HN-HN
OPEN!!
THAT IS WHY KAIJI WAIT ED!
YOU'RE MY THIRD VICTIM!
KAIJI APPEARS TO BE INDIF-FERENT TO THE OUT-COME.
FALL STRAIGHT DOWN TO HELL!!

HUH ...?!
BUT HOW ..?!
NO... NO WAY...!

WAIT !!
W...
UR GH ...!
SEE YA.

JUST HOLD ON, KAIJI!!
ONE MORE TIME...!

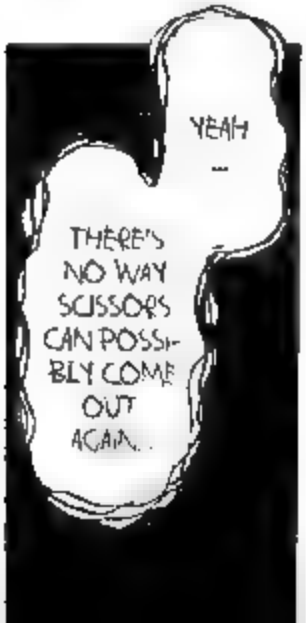
GET BACK HERE, KAIJI!!
THAT'S RIGHT!
YOU WANT AN-OTHER MATCH ?

.
:
o

IT'S ALL DOWNHILL FROM HERE.

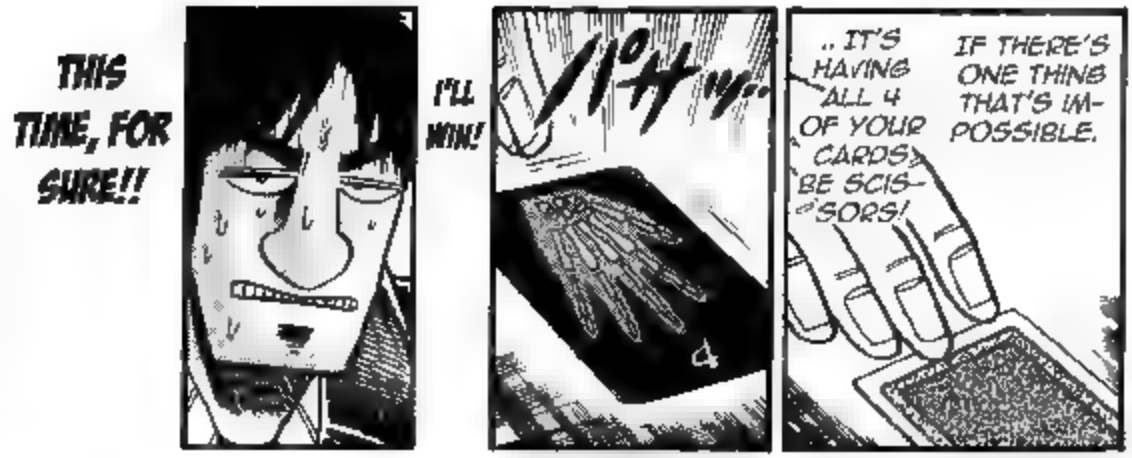
HEH HEH ..
FURU-HATA-- SAN.. !!

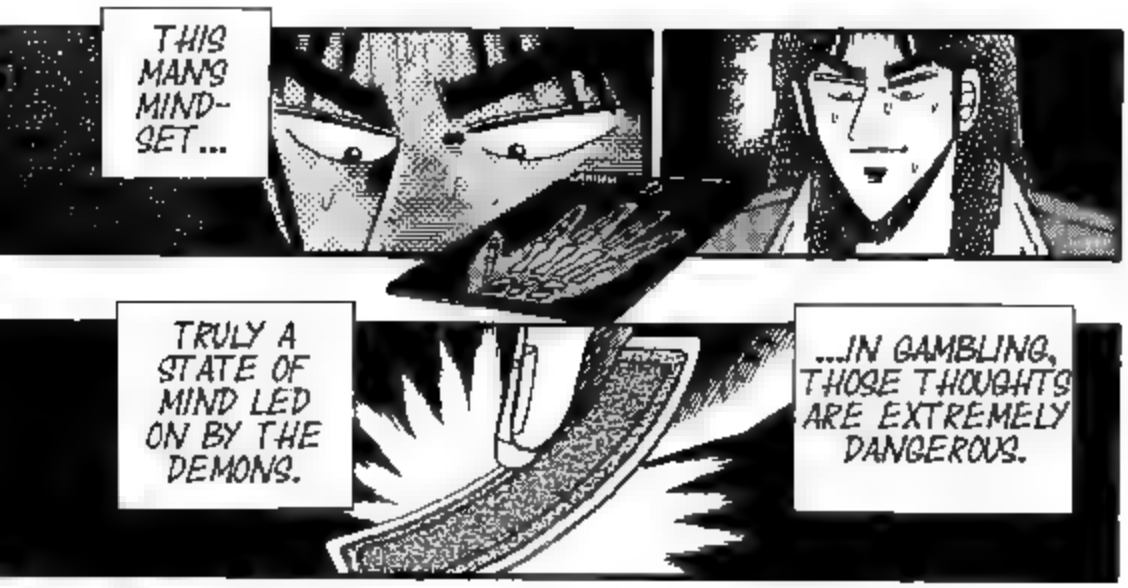
...SUPPOSED IMPOSSIBILITIES.

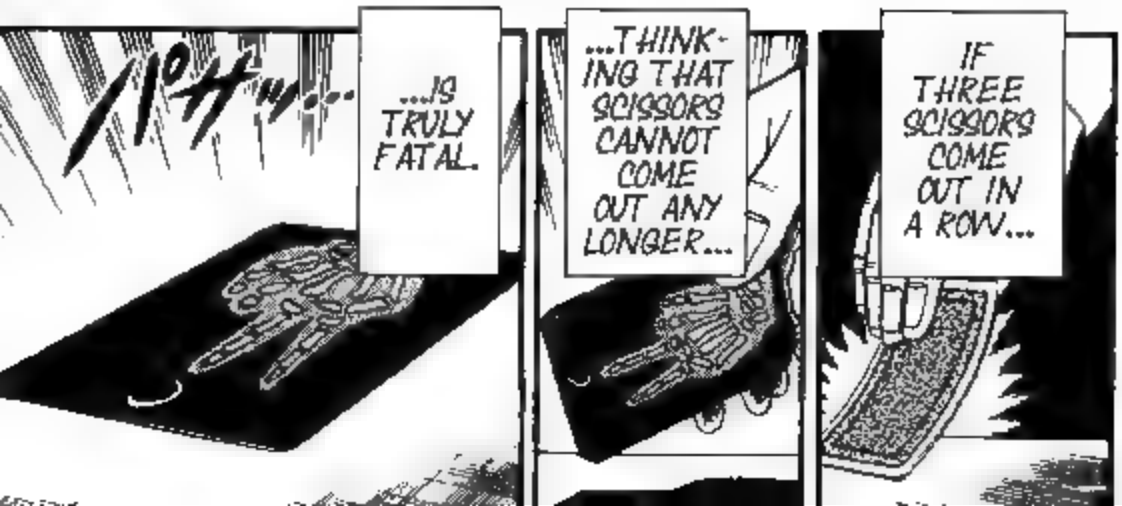


IT CAN'T ...!!

OPEN! THE FOURTH MATCH ...!







FOLLOWING THAT PATH CAN ONLY LEAD ONE TO SINKING IN THE SAND.

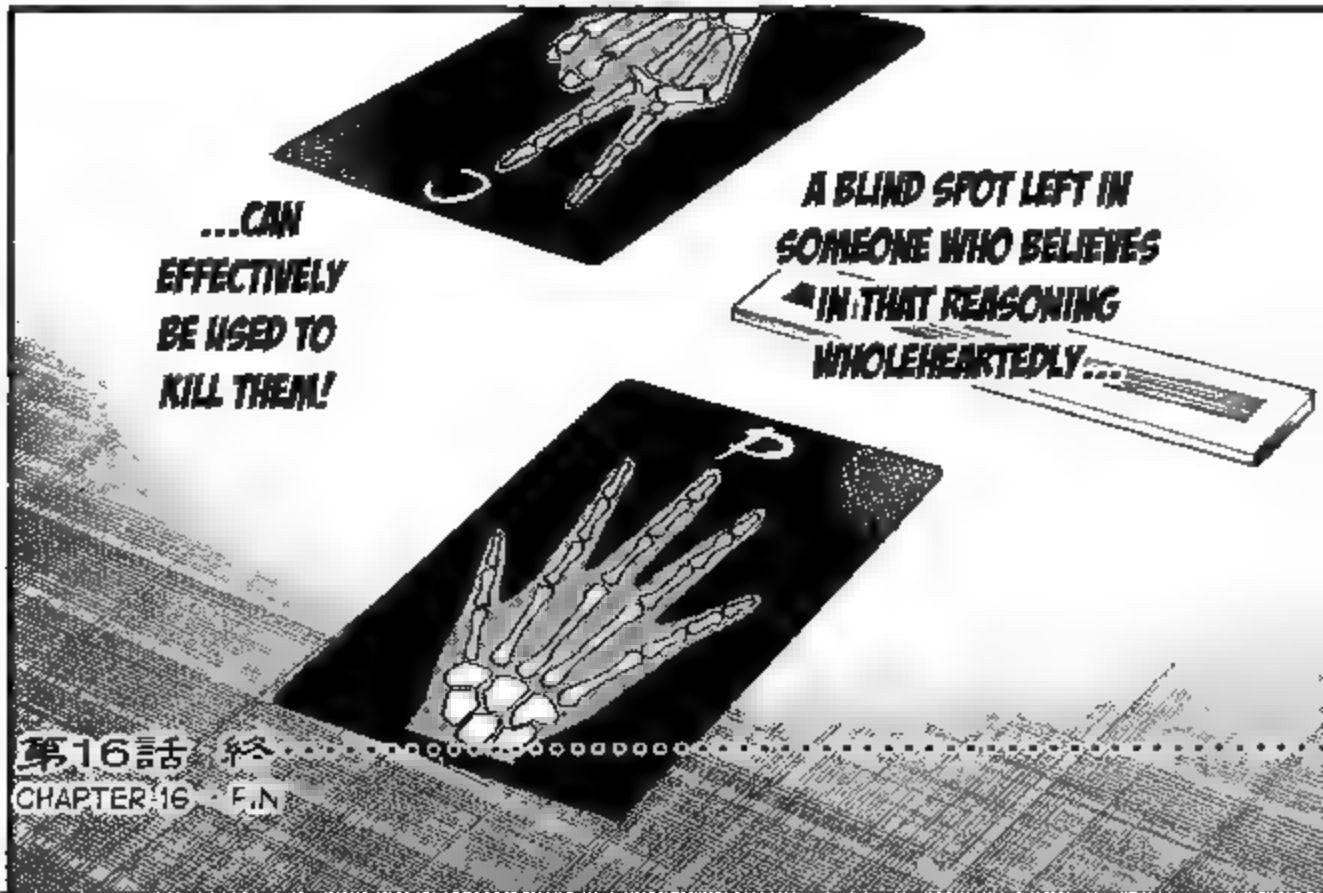
TOTAL SELF-DE-STRUC TION!

THIS MAN HAS BEEN MOCKED ...
...BY THE DEMON KNOWN TO MEN AS GAMBLING.

HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN .?
WHY ..?
.....

ANYONE IN YOUR SITUATION WOULD FIGURE THE SAME EXACT THING
YOU COULD HARDLY CALL THIS A MISTAKE
JUST A COINCIDENCE
.....
HOW COULD. ALL FOUR OF THEM .

..IS THAT YOUR READ ON ME WASN'T A PROBLEM, AT ALL.
WHAT I'M SAY-ING ..
UGH !
ESPE-CIAL-LY
ONCE YOU BELIEVE YOUR THEORY TO BE TRUE, YOU NO LONGER DOUBT IT
MAKE ONE WRONG MOVE WITH THAT, AND YOU'RE DEAD
HOWEVER
..SOMEONE WHO'S USED THAT THEORY TO WIN ALL ALONG
HEH HEH ..



第16話 終
CHAPTER 16 - F.N

KAIJI: THREE WINS, WITH ONLY ONE LOSS!

CHAPTER 17 - SALVATION

...IT'S NOT A QUESTION OF WHO HAS WHAT STARS
ALL THOSE STARS DO IS CONTRIBUTE TO THE TOTAL ...
. IS FIGURE OUT HOW WERE GOING TO WIN MORE STARS FROM OTHERS.
WHAT WE NEED TO DO NOW ...

...THERE SHOULD BE NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT!
IF ALL THREE OF US ARE REALLY ONE UNIT ..
...WE ALL NEED TO WORK TOGETHER TO THINK UP A PLAN.
AND TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL OF 9 STARS ...
WE NEED 9 STARS FOR THE THREE OF US
ANY-WAY ...

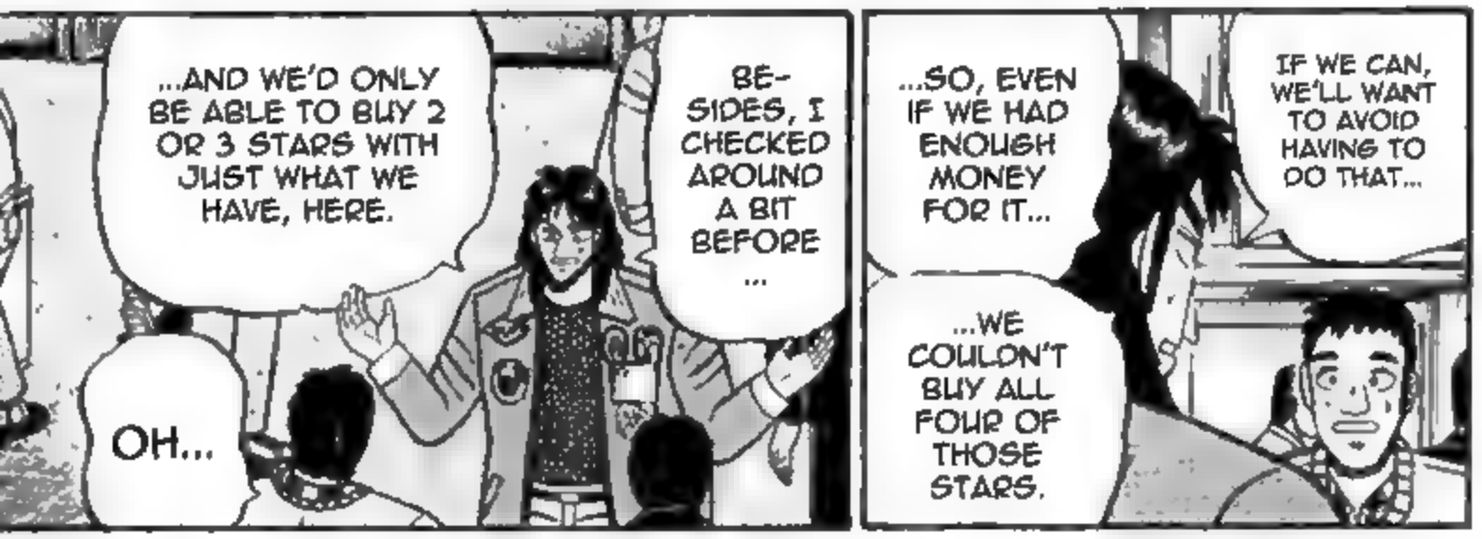
I KNOW YOU GUYS AREN'T EXACTLY FEELING GREAT ABOUT THE SITUATION WE'RE IN...

SO IF ANY ONE OF US THINKS THEY'RE BETTER THAN THE REST...
WE'LL ALL BE CRIPPLED IF WE DON'T GET OUT OF HERE...
...HAVING ONE PERSON CALL THEMSELVES THE LEADER IS KIND OF DAMAGING.
SO FOR KEEPING THIS GROUP UNIFIED...

HOW MIGHT WE TURN THESE 5 STARS WE HAVE INTO OUR GOAL OF 9?
YOU GET ME?
SO, NEXT UP...
WHAT I MEAN IS THINKING LIKE THAT WOULD BE SELFISH
I SEE ...
..IT WOULD BE DAMAGING TO THE WHOLE GROUP

THAT'S NOT GOING TO WORK.
...I GUESS WE HAVE TO BUY STARS INSTEAD.
...WELL, WE CAN'T... WE HAVE NO CARDS, SO...
HOW TO TURN 5 INTO 9...
HUH ...?

...WE WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE A DENT IN OUR DEBT...
IF WE GO AND SPEND IT ALL ON STARS...
..SO WE'LL HAVE TO SHOULDER MILLIONS OF YEN MORE THAN BEFORE.
...GETS AN INTEREST COM-POUNDED EVERY 10 MINUTES.
TRY AND THINK BACK FOR A SECOND. THIS MONEY WE HAVE RIGHT AT THIS MOMENT...


...AND WE'D ONLY BE ABLE TO BUY 2 OR 3 STARS WITH JUST WHAT WE HAVE, HERE.
BE-SIDES, I CHECKED AROUND A BIT BEFORE ...
OH...
...SO, EVEN IF WE HAD ENOUGH MONEY FOR IT...
IF WE CAN, WE'LL WANT TO AVOID HAVING TO DO THAT...
...WE COULDN'T BUY ALL FOUR OF THOSE STARS.

WHA ...?
...WE JUST NEED TO GET SOME.
WE CAN TAKE CARE OF THAT...
...WE DON'T HAVE ANY CARDS LEFT, SO...
BUT, STILL ...
JUST THEN ...!
CAN... CAN YOU REALLY DO THAT...?!
HUH ?!
SOME-ONE WANTS TO GIVE US THEIR CARDS, THEY CAN
WHAT ?

ざわ..ざわ..
.....?
ざわ..
HUH? THAT'S ODD...
?
ざわ..
QUIET DOWN!
THEN... DID HE DO SOMETHING WRONG...?
?
ざわ..
...HE STILL HAS ALL 3 OF HIS STARS ...
THAT GUY ...
ざわ

TAKE HEED!
IF YOU DISPOSE OF EVEN ONE CARD...
...YOU WILL BE UNCONDITIONALLY SENT TO THE OTHER ROOM!
WE INFORMED YOU OF THIS AT THE START!
ACTS SUCH AS THIS ONE CANNOT AND SHALL NOT BE PERMITTED!!
JUST NOW, THIS MAN...
...USED ONE OF OUR TOILETS...
...TO FLUSH DOWN HIS REMAINING CARDS!

...AND DEAL WITH IT ACCORDINGLY!
.....
THE DISPOSAL OF CARDS IS NOT PERMITTED!
WE WILL SEE YOU IF YOU DO IT...
LISTEN, NOW!

ざわ..
ざわ..
ざわ

HE JUST SAID THAT WE CAN'T DISPOSE OF CARDS..
AND THAT MEANS...
IF YOU CAN'T USE UP YOUR CARDS THROUGH MATCHES, YOU CAN'T GET RID OF THEM...!

I KNEW IT, THAT'S NO GOOD!
KAIJI-SAA-AAAAN!!
FAR EAST AIR FORCE

ARE YOU BEING SERIOUS WITH ME, HERE?
HUH ...?

COME ON, NOW ...
...EVEN IF SOMEONE WANTS TO GIVE UP CARDS, THEY CAN'T DO IT!

TO BE FRANK, IT WAS A GOOD THING.
NO MORE, NO LESS.
...THE GUY THROWING HIS CARDS AWAY WAS JUST INCREDIBLY STUPID.
...THE INCI-DENT JUST NOW...
IN THE AFFAIR ...OR RATHER ...

SAY WHAT ?
...SO I SAY GOOD RID-DANCE TO HIM.
LIKE HIM, WE HAVE PLENTY OF PEOPLE TO GIVE US WHAT WE NEED...
...GET THOSE THOUGHTS OUT OF YOUR HEAD.
IF YOU THINK AT ALL THAT CARDS ARE A HINDERENCE IN THIS GAME...

...IS THROUGH TRADE.
AND THAT WAY...
BUT THERE IS.
THERE WAS NO WAY HE COULD HAVE-
HOW CAN YOU SAY SOME-THING LIKE THAT...!

WE'VE ALREADY GIVEN EACH OTHER CARDS SEVERAL TIMES, NOW, HAVEN'T WE?
JUST THINK ABOUT IT...
I'M TELLING YOU, IT IS!
NO WAY!!
TRADING CARDS BETWEEN PLAYERS IS AL-LOWED ON THIS SHIP.

...DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT THEY HAVEN'T BEEN WATCHING WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING?
I MEAN, LOOK AT ALL THE BLACK SUITS ON THIS FLOOR...

WE'VE DONE IT WITH STARS, TOO.
OH ...!

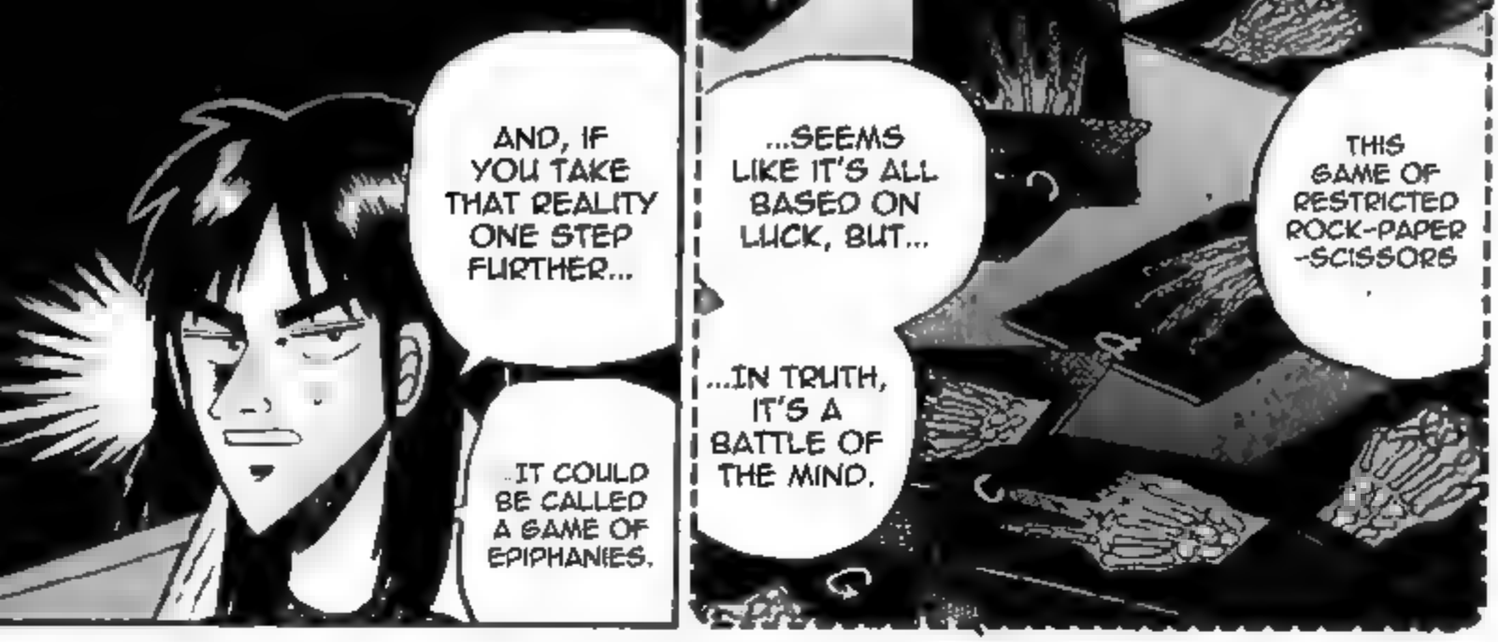
...IT WOULDN'T TAKE THEM LONG TO GUESS THAT, SINCE THEY WERE GIVEN MONEY AT THE START
FOR PEOPLE WITH GOOD SENSES ...

...IT'S ALLOWED.
IN OTHER WORDS ...

WE HAVEN'T EXACTLY BEEN SNEAKING AROUND IN THE SHADOWS, EITHER...
WE'VE BEEN TRADING CARDS OVER THIS FLOOR, OUT IN PUBLIC!
WOULDN'T IT BE SOME KINDA MIRACLE IF THEY DIDN'T SEE US?!

.. BUT TRADING THEM IS FINE!
IT'S TRUE YOU CAN'T DISPOSE OF THEM...

INEVITABLY, ONE QUESTION WILL BEGIN TO SURFACE.
A QUESTION OF WHAT PRICE TO BUY, AND TO SELL.
...SO NATRUALLY, THERE MUST BE SOME TRADE INVOLVED.
PLUS, EVERYONE HERE KNOWS THAT EVERYONE ELSE HAS MONEY TO SPEND.
AND AS FAR AS THAT GOES ...
ALMOST THE SAME AS THROW-ING THEM AWAY.
...IT CAN EVEN GO DOWN TO O YEN.
NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT.
BE IT 10 MILLION OR 10 THOUSAND YEN, IT'S ALL GOOD.
ANY AMOUNT YOU CHOOSE IS GOOD AS ANY OTHER...
AND IF WE PRESS EVEN FURTHER WITH THAT IDEA...
ON THIS SHIP, THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW FOR SURE THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION...
SO IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S LIM-ITLESS.
SOME-HOW OR ANOTHER, I FIGURED ALL THIS OUT.
AH...
...MAKES DISPOSING OF CARDS TOTALLY UNNECES-SARY
IN OTHER WORDS, THE SYS-TEM ALLOWING FOR TRADING CARDS AND STARS BETWEEN PLAYERS ..
.....


AND, IF YOU TAKE THAT REALITY ONE STEP FURTHER...
..IT COULD BE CALLED A GAME OF EPIPHANIES.
...SEEMS LIKE IT'S ALL BASED ON LUCK, BUT...
...IN TRUTH, IT'S A BATTLE OF THE MIND.
THIS GAME OF RESTRICTED ROCK-PAPER -SCISSORS

...INFORMED US OF THE RULES FOR THE GAME.
BEFORE THIS GAME STARTED, THAT TONEGAWA GUY...
YEAH.
EPIPHA- NIES...?

...TO SEE WHO COULD THINK FOR THEM- SELVES.
IT WAS TO TEST THE INTELLI- GENCE OF THE PLAYERS HERE...
HOWEVER, HE GAVE US ONLY THE BASICS... ...SCRAPED DOWN TO THE BARE MINIMAL INFORMATION.
...CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD.
...BUT JUST HAVING A SINGLE EPIPHANY LIKE THIS...
...AND THIS COULD HAVE BEEN THE END..
WE'RE OUT OF CARDS FOR THE TIME BEING ...
BUT NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY HE LEFT OUT SO MUCH... LIKE WHAT THE MONEY WE'D BEEN GIVEN WAS FOR.

...YOU'LL WIND UP GOING TO HELL, JUST LIKE HIM.
IF YOU CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT THIS GAME IS ALL ABOUT..
IT'S JUST LIKE THAT GUY WE SAW.
AS AN EXAMPLE OF THAT ...
...THERE'S ANOTHER SET OF "RULES" LYING UNDERNEATH
ASIDE FROM THE RULES WE WERE TOLD ABOUT
TRUTH IS, THE GAME IS QUITE AN EVIL ONE.
RESTRICTED ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS...
...IS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THAN IT LOOKS.
YOU CAN'T EXPECT THIS GAME TO BE WON EASILY...
AND SOMEHOW OR ANOTHER, WE HAVE UNCOVERED ONE.
WHETHER OR NOT THE PLAYERS CAN UNCOVER THOSE RULES...
THOSE RULES ARE LIKE THE TRUE MEANING OF THE APPARENT ONES
...IS WHAT DECIDES THEIR SURVIVAL IN THIS GAME
...THAT IS THE SECRET RULE WE HAVE UNCOVERED.
THAT IS TO SAY..
...WE HAVE FOUND THAT THE TRADE OF CARDS AND STARS IS ALLOWED
BY BANDING TOGETHER AS A GROUP

AND WHILE WE DON'T KNOW EVERYTHING TO KNOW ABOUT THOSE HIDDEN RULES...
BUT WE'RE ABOVE THAT, NOW.
...WE'VE STILL BEEN GIVEN A LEG UP ABOVE MANY OTHERS, HERE
...ARE, EVEN NOW, RUNNING AROUND ON THIS FLOOR.
STILL, THOUGH, PEOPLE WHO HAVEN'T DISCOVERED THAT, YET...
OKAY ...
NOW, THEN, LET'S GOGET SOME CARDS.
...IF YOU CAN'T FIGURE THAT OUT, THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO.
BEFORE YOU CAN EVEN THINK ABOUT WIN-NING OR LOSING, HERE ..
...WE'LL BE DRAGGED AWAY TO THE OTHER ROOM, RIGHT?!
BUT... BUT IF WE'RE NOT OUT OF CARDS BY THE END...
WHAT ...?
WE CAN'T JUST GO AND BUY AS MANY CARDS AS WE WANT...
STILL THOU GH...
WHA ...?!
YOU GUYS ARE SUCH MORONS, Y'KNOW THAT?!
GY AA AA UG H...!
YEAH ...
GET TOO MANY, AND WE'RE TOAST...

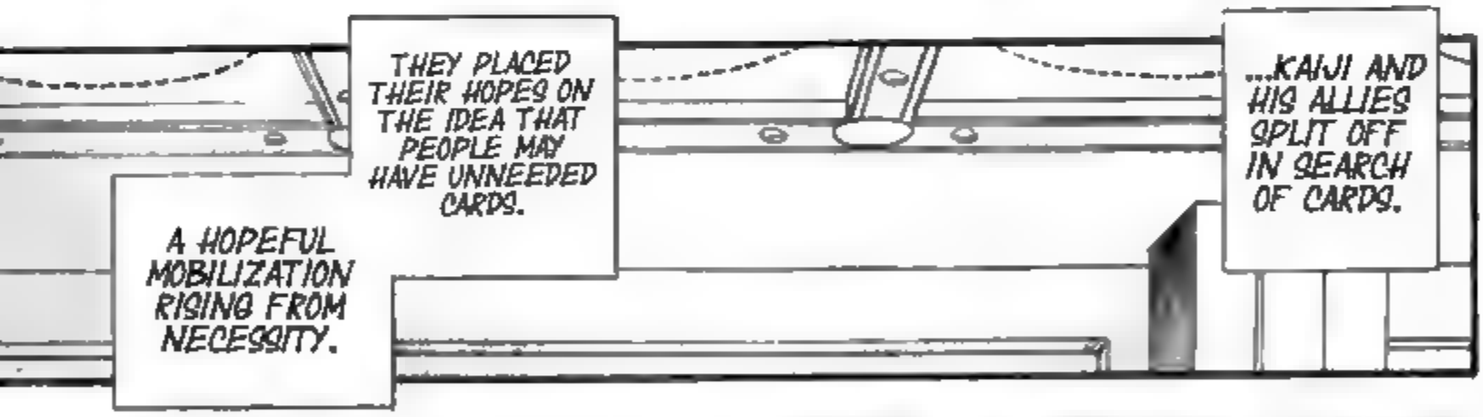
OH MY GOD ...
WE CAN ...?
I MEAN, IN A GROUP, WE CAN GET AS MANY CARDS AS WE WANT, CAN'T WE?!
...BUT THIS IS A GROUP, FOR GOD'S SAKE!
WELL, SURE, ALONE, THAT MIGHT BE AN ISSUE...

...HAVING TOO MANY CARDS IS EASY TO TAKE CARE OF IN A GROUP!
IF WE ALL NEED TO PASS AS COMRADES, WE CAN JUST USE UP OUR CARDS THROUGH DRAWS!

I SEE ...
THERE'S A LOT OF RISK INVOLVED WITH IT, BUT IT'S STILL MANAGEABLE.
I TRIED TO DO THAT WITH THIS GUY WHEN I FIRST GOT ON THIS SHIP.
THOUGH I KIND OF FIGURED THAT USING UP CARDS THROUGH DRAWS WAS KIND OF OBVIOUS...
NOT TO WORRY.
OH ...!!

START ASKING PEOPLE IF THEY NEED TO GET RID OF EXTRA CARDS.
OKAY, LET'S GO.
YES, SIR...!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT WINDING UP WITH TOO MANY CARDS.
...WELL, ANYWAY, THAT'S WHY.

AND, WITH THAT ...
OKAY!
SPLIT UP!!

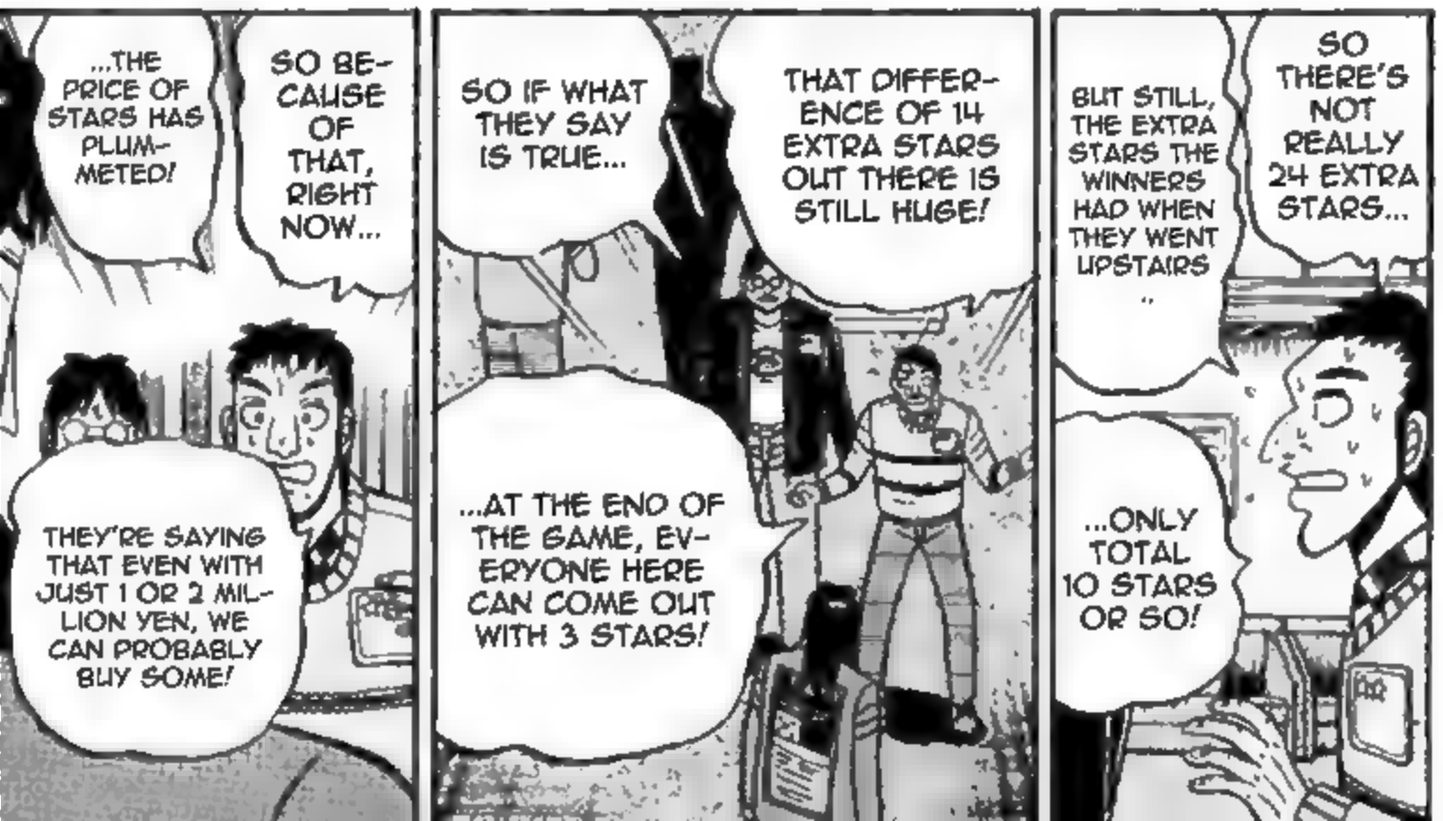

A HOPEFUL MOBILIZATION RISING FROM NECESSITY.
THEY PLACED THEIR HOPES ON THE IDEA THAT PEOPLE MAY HAVE UNNEEDED CARDS.
...KAIJI AND HIS ALLIES SPLIT OFF IN SEARCH OF CARDS.

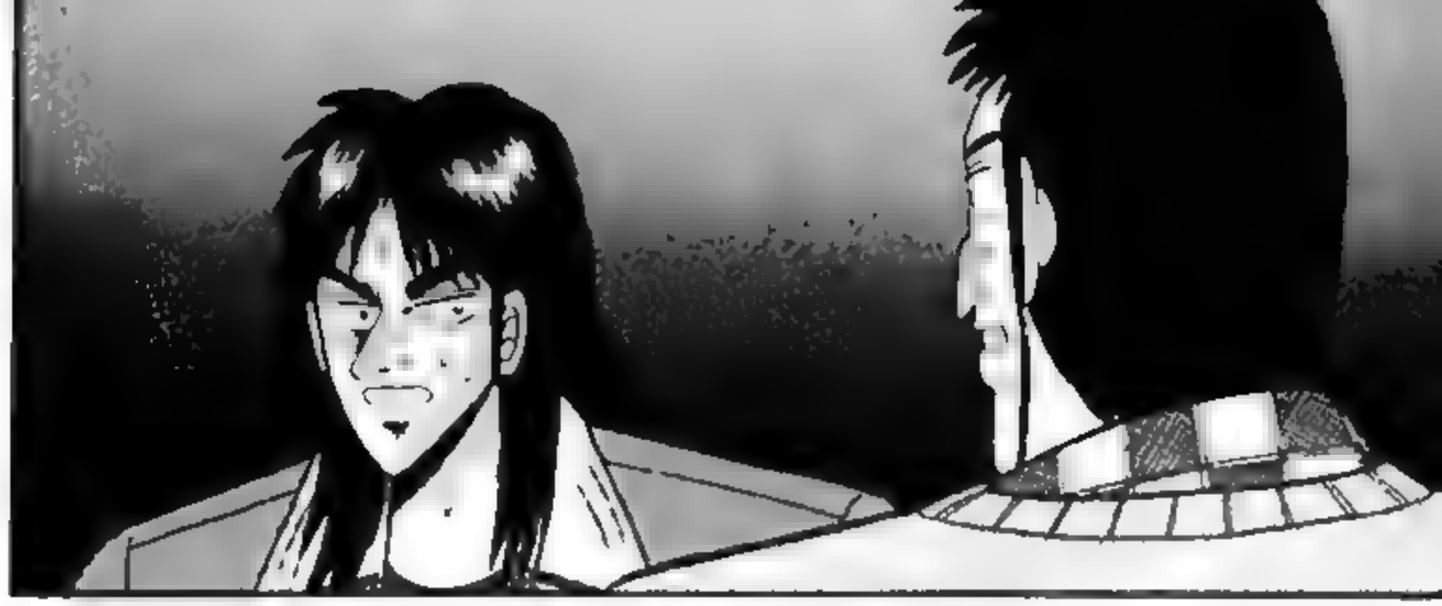
KAIJI-SAAAAAAAN!!
INDEED, THE VERY BASICS OF THE GAME HAD BEEN TURNED ON THEIR HEAD!
...IT SEEMED AS THOUGH KAIJI'S PLIGHT WAS BEING ENTIRELY IGNORED...
HOW-EVER ...
THE GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE ROOM HAD CHANGED DRAMATICALLY.

THEY SAID WE DON'T NEED TO DO IT...
.....
YOU GUYS ...
WELL, SEE...
WHAT NOW?
?
!!
OKAY, WELL ...
SPIT IT OUT, MAN... WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME?
HUH ...?
"WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING THAT FOR," THEY SAID...
"THE PRICE HAS SLIPPED", THEY SAID ...
THEY'RE ALL SAYING THAT EVERYONE HERE WILL BE ABLE TO GET SAVED...!

BULL CRAP!
THEY SAY THAT ALL THE PLAYERS ON THIS FLOOR ARE GOING TO BE SAVED!
"EVERY-ONE'S GONNA BE SAVED" ...?
YEAH ...!
THEY SAY THAT THERE'S EXTRA STARS!
THAT'S JUST A BASELESS RUMOR!

OF COURSE, THERE'S STILL PEOPLE WHO RAN THROUGH THEIR CARDS AND HAVE MORE THAN 3 STARS...
...AND HAVE ALREADY GONE UP-STAIRS.
THAT ALONE IS WAY MORE THAN WE NEED TO FREE EVERYONE!
8 PEOPLE * 3 STARS MAKES 24 EXTRAS!
8 PEOPLE HAVE AL-READY BEEN TAKEN TO THE OTHER ROOM SINCE THE GAME


...THE PRICE OF STARS HAS PLUM-METED!
SO BE-CAUSE OF THAT, RIGHT NOW...
THEY'RE SAYING THAT EVEN WITH JUST 1 OR 2 MIL-LION YEN, WE CAN PROBABLY BUY SOME!
SO IF WHAT THEY SAY IS TRUE...
THAT DIFFER-ENCE OF 14 EXTRA STARS OUT THERE IS STILL HUGE!
...AT THE END OF THE GAME, EV-ERYONE HERE CAN COME OUT WITH 3 STARS!
BUT STILL, THE EXTRA STARS THE WINNERS HAD WHEN THEY WENT UPSTAIRS ..
SO THERE'S NOT REALLY 24 EXTRA STARS...
...ONLY TOTAL 10 STARS OR SO!

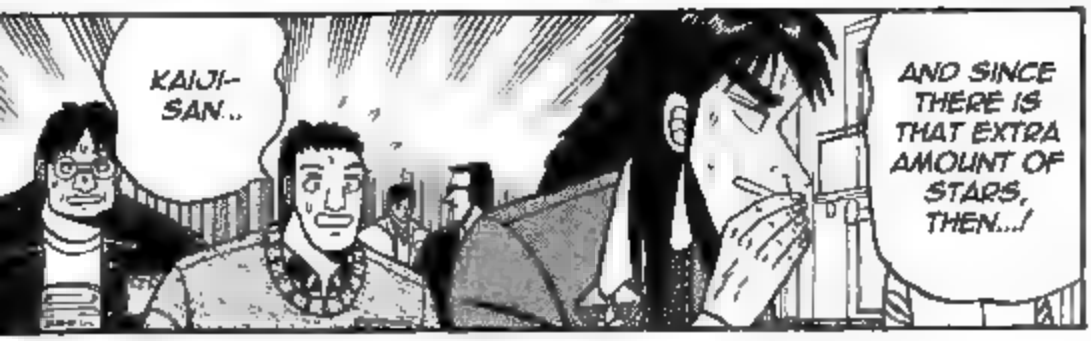


THAT CONCEPT... CAN THIS GAMBLE REALLY ALLOW FOR THAT ...?!

IT'S CLEAR AS DAY WHEN YOU LAY IT ALL OUT LIKE THAT...!

第17話 終
CHAPTER 17 - FIN...

EVERY-ONE CAN MAKE IT OUT OF HERE ...?



CHAPTER 18 - EARTHQUAKE

第18話「激震」

.....

THIS ISN'T SOMETHING WE NEED TO DO RIGHT AWAY...!

WHY ARE WE IN SUCH A HURRY TO BUY MORE STARS...?!

I MEAN IT'S NOT LIKE THEY'LL BE TOTALLY FREE OR ANYTHING...

WELL ...

...SO THE PRICE WILL PROBABLY GO DOWN WAY MORE WHEN TIME PASSES!

I MEAN, THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO HIDE THAT ONCE THE GAME ENDS..

TRANSLATED BY SONICKRAZY

CLEANING BY BIGGUMS

TYPESETTING BY KAZUHIKO

... SO WE DON'T NEED TO DECIDE RIGHT AWAY!

THE PRICE WILL STILL STAY UNDER 1 OR 2 MILLION YEN ..

IT'S NOT LIKE THIS IS THE END OF IT ALL!

SO...

I MEAN, THERE'S MORE STARS THAN EVERYONE HERE COULD USE, AREN'T THERE..?

SO WE SHOULDN'T JUST GO AND RUSH INTO THIS WITHOUT THINKING...

MM MMM MM..

THAT'S REALLY IMPOR- TANT, Y'KNOW!

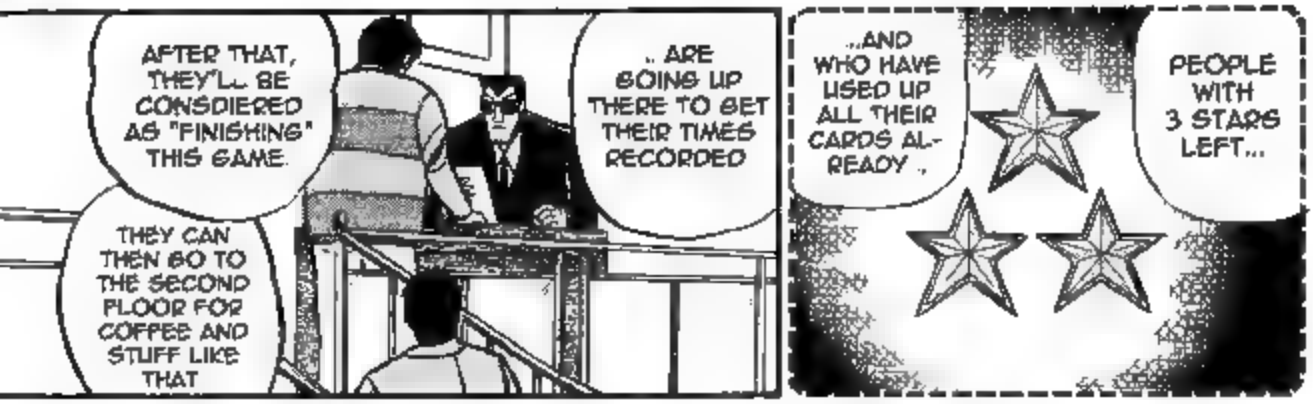
BUT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET 4 STARS FOR 1 MILLION YEN!

...THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STARS LEFT ON THE FLOOR WON'T HAVE CHANGED!

EVEN IF WE WAIT UNTIL THE VERY END OF THE GAME...

OH...
THERE'S PEOPLE GOING UPSTAIRS ...
HUH ...?
WHAT'S GOING ON, THERE...?

"FINISHERS" ...?
BUT THOSE ARE THE "FINISHERS" IN THIS GAME..!
...AND IF WE HADN'T REALIZED IT JUST NOW, WE COULD HAVE WOUND UP LIKE THEM..
WELL, THEY HAVEN'T BEEN POPPING UP ALL OVER THE PLACE OR ANYTHING...
GUESS THEY JUST HAVEN'T REALIZED IT, YET...!

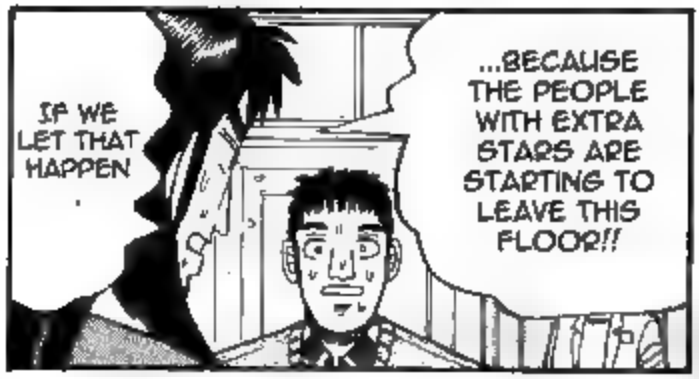

AFTER THAT, THEY'LL BE CONSDIERED AS "FINISHING" THIS GAME.
THEY CAN THEN GO TO THE SECOND FLOOR FOR COFFEE AND STUFF LIKE THAT
.. ARE GOING UP THERE TO GET THEIR TIMES RECORDED
..AND WHO HAVE USED UP ALL THEIR CARDS AL-READY ..
PEOPLE WITH 3 STARS LEFT...

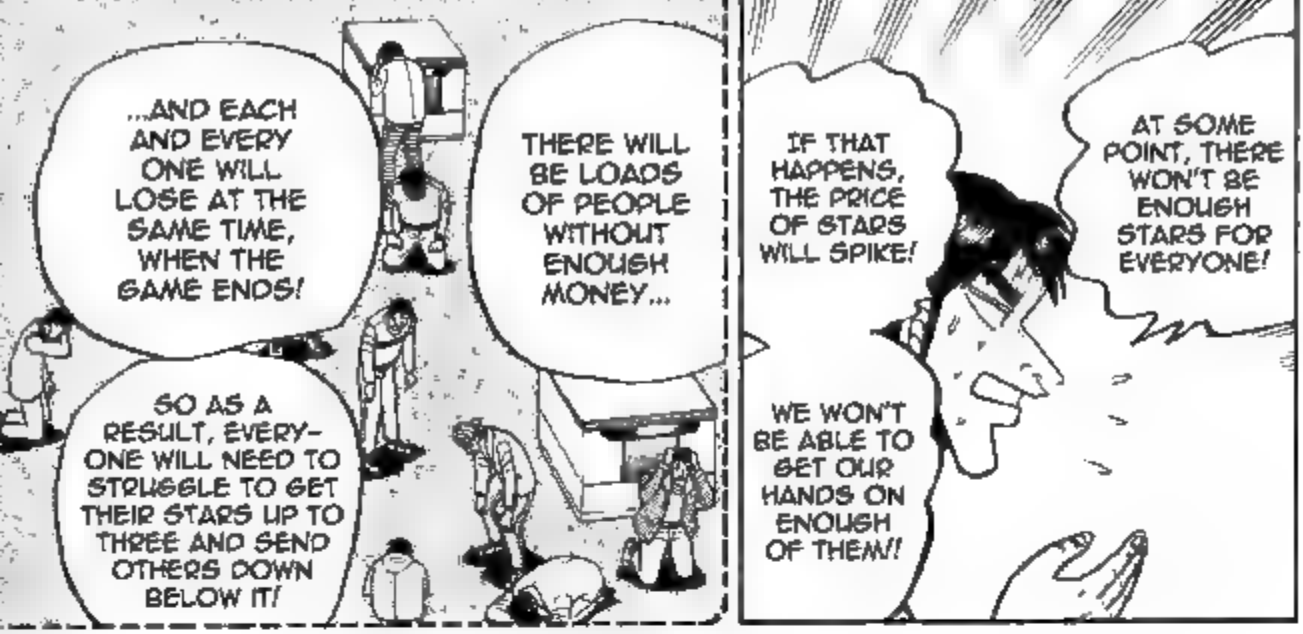
..REALLY RELAXING UP THERE...
IT'S PROB-ABLY ..

HUH ?
AH !
FOR SOME REASON, IT SEEMS LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE CROWDING AROUND UP THERE, NOW
HAH ...!!

NOW'S OUR ONLY SHOT!!
GO AND BUY 'EM NOW! STARS!!
OH, CRAP!!
HURRY!!
WHAT ...?
HUH ...?
DON'T YOU GET IT?!
WHY ARE WE... HURRY-ING...?
... TAKING OUR LIFE AWAY!!
THIS SHIP IS...
THEY'RE BEING TAKEN!!

THEY'RE RUNNING OFF WITH THOSE EXTRA STARS!!




...AND EACH AND EVERY ONE WILL LOSE AT THE SAME TIME, WHEN THE GAME ENDS!
THERE WILL BE LOADS OF PEOPLE WITHOUT ENOUGH MONEY...
SO AS A RESULT, EVERY-ONE WILL NEED TO STRUGGLE TO GET THEIR STARS UP TO THREE AND SEND OTHERS DOWN BELOW IT!
IF THAT HAPPENS, THE PRICE OF STARS WILL SPIKE!
AT SOME POINT, THERE WON'T BE ENOUGH STARS FOR EVERYONE!
WE WON'T BE ABLE TO GET OUR HANDS ON ENOUGH OF THEM!!

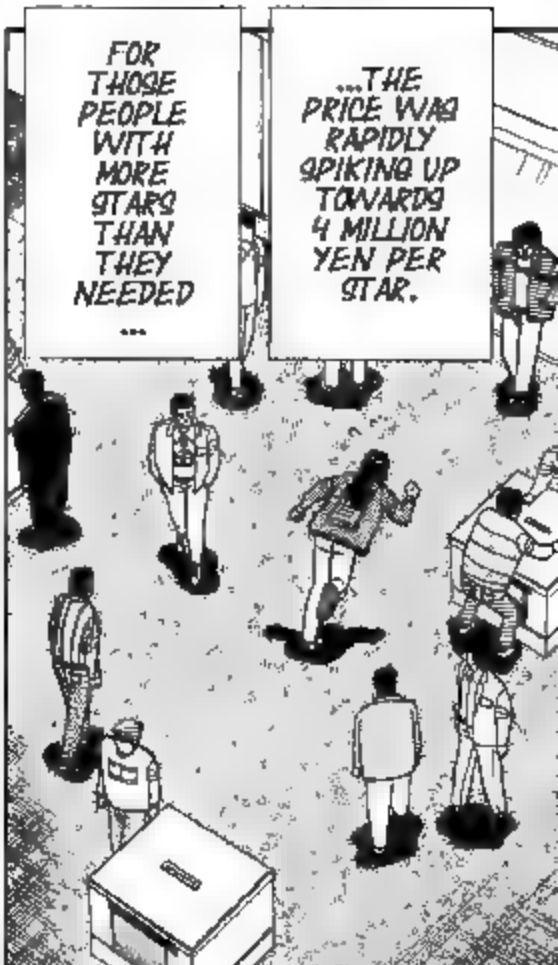
AH...!
WHICH IS WHERE WE'LL BE IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, QUICK!

...THIS SHIP DOES NOT ALLOW FOR SUCH AN EASY SOLUTION!
EE EEE EE!!
YES...
THAT'S WHY WE NEED TO GO!!
KAIJI-SAN...!
...WE'VE GOTTA DO IT NOW!!
IF WE'RE GONNA BUY STARS...

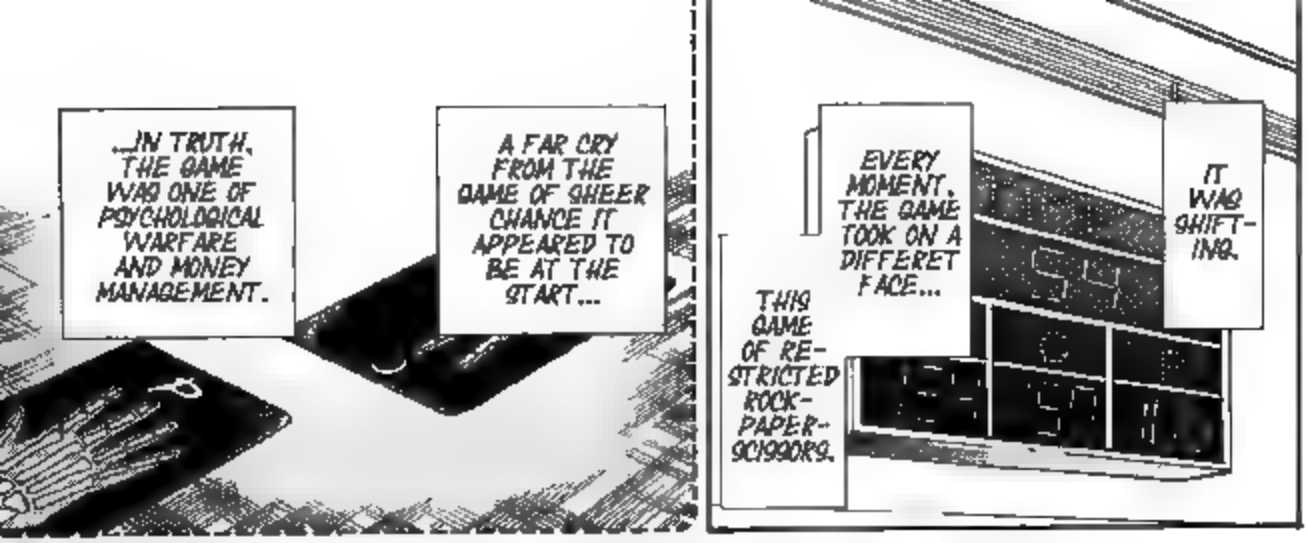
AS FAR AS THE PURCHASING OF STARS IS CONCERNED...
...THIS EXCESS OF STARS WAS MERELY A MOMENTARY OCCURANCE.
IN THE END ...
...FOR SUCH A SURPLUS OF STARS!
THE ORGANIZERS OF THIS CRUISE WOULD CERTAINLY NEVER ALLOW...

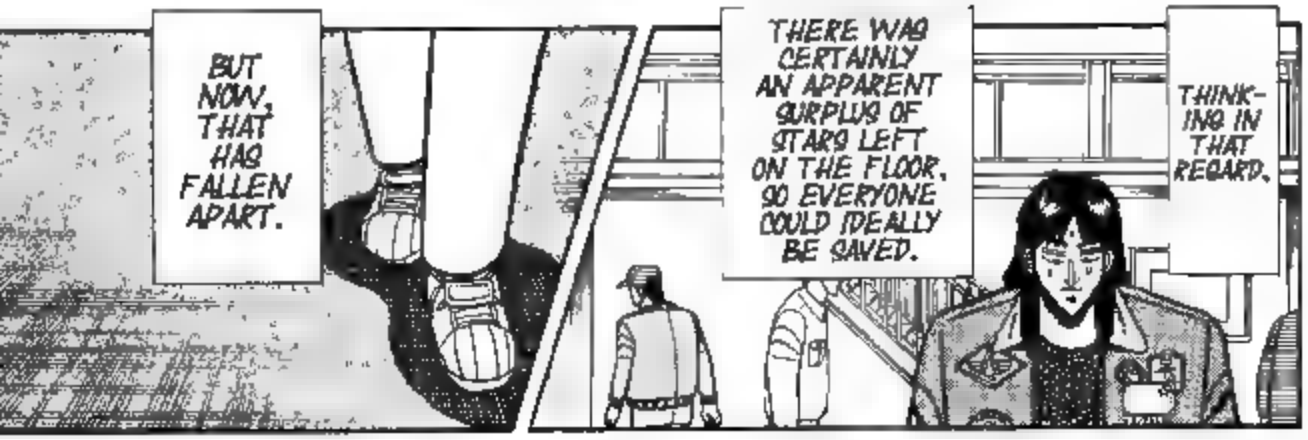
WHILE STARS ON THE FLOOR COULD CURRENTLY BE BOUGHT FOR AROUND 2-3 MILLION
BUT SPEAKING RATIONALLY, THIS IS ONLY TO BE EXPECTED.
THE SITUATION IMMEDIATELY PROGRESSED TOWARDS ONE WITHOUT ENOUGH STARS FOR EVERYONE
...THAT EXCESS WAS FLATTENED OUT SURPRISINGLY QUICKLY.

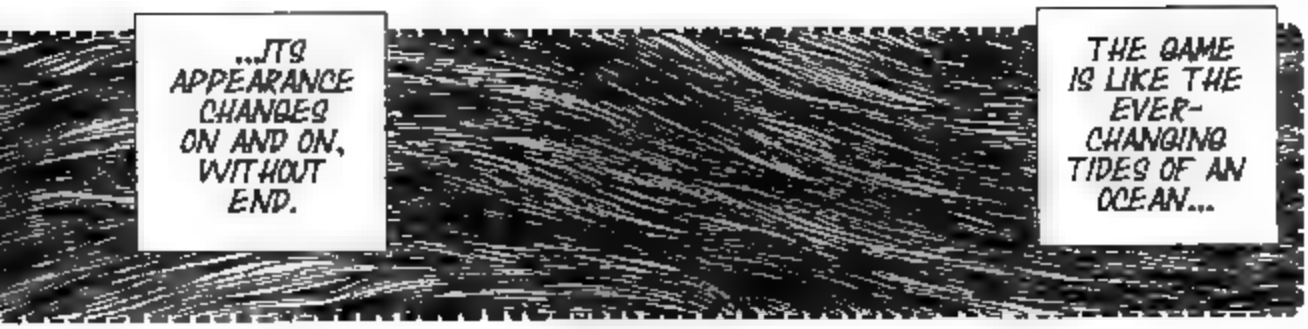
...THEIR PRIORITIES LAY MORE IN SECURING THEIR OWN SAFETY.
.....
...MORE THAN FINDING SOMEONE TO SELL THOSE STARS TO...


FOR THOSE PEOPLE WITH MORE STARS THAN THEY NEEDED ...
...THE PRICE WAS RAPIDLY SPIKING UP TOWARDS 4 MILLION YEN PER STAR.

...AND THE TOTAL NUMBER...
IN THE END, STARS WERE NOT ABLE TO CIRCULATE...
...OF THEM SHARPLY DROPPED.

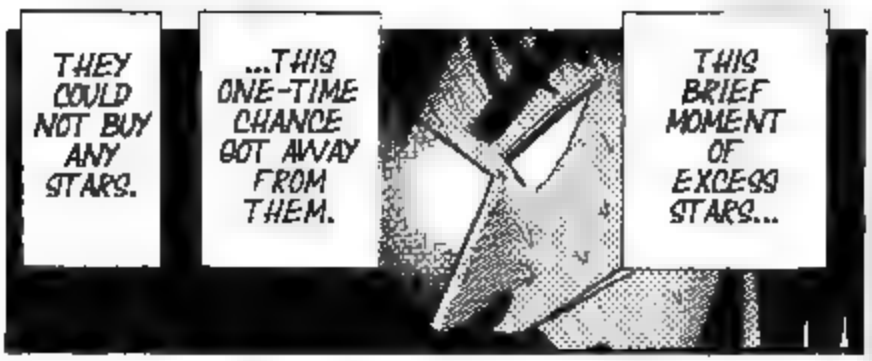

...IN TRUTH, THE GAME WAS ONE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AND MONEY MANAGEMENT.
A FAR CRY FROM THE GAME OF SHEER CHANCE IT APPEARED TO BE AT THE START...
THIS GAME OF RE-STRICTED ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS.
EVERY MOMENT, THE GAME TOOK ON A DIFFERET FACE...
IT WAS SHIFT-ING.


BUT NOW, THAT HAS FALLEN APART.
THERE WAS CERTAINLY AN APPARENT SURPLUS OF STARS LEFT ON THE FLOOR, SO EVERYONE COULD IDEALLY BE SAVED.
THINK-ING IN THAT REGARD,

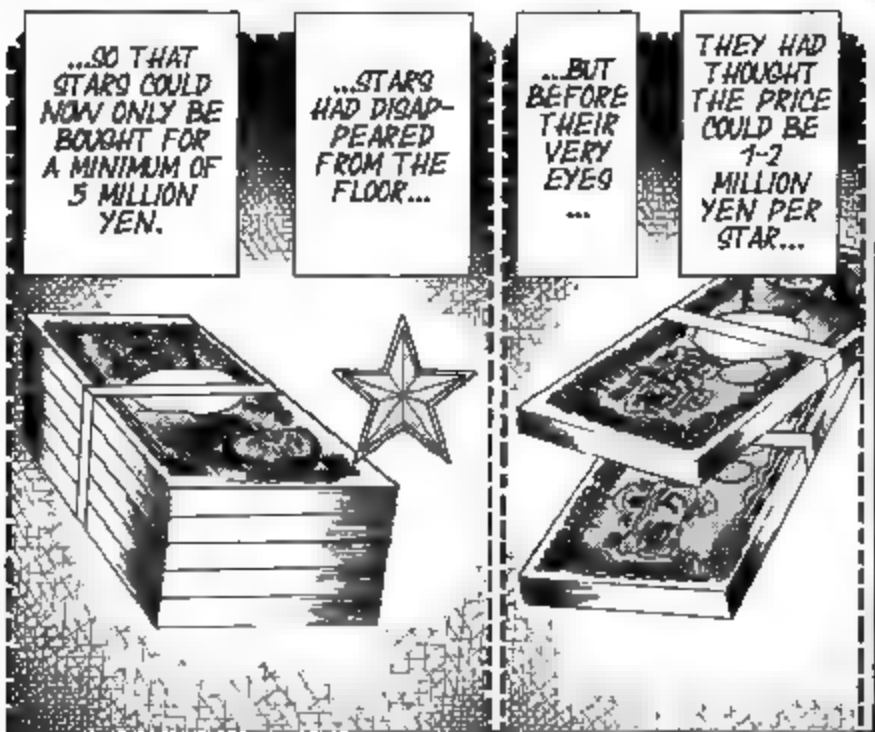

...ITS APPEARANCE CHANGES ON AND ON, WITHOUT END.
THE GAME IS LIKE THE EVER-CHANGING TIDES OF AN OCEAN...

...WILL BE SWEPT AWAY TO THEIR DEATHS!
AND THOSE WHO ARE UNABLE TO RIDE THE TIDES OF THIS HARSH SEA...

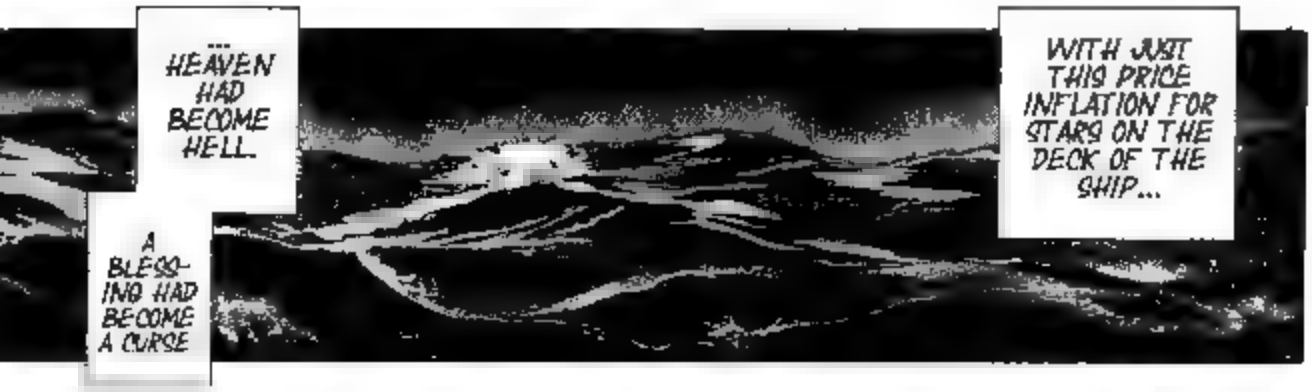
THEY WILL BE DESTROYED!


THEY COULD NOT BUY ANY STARS.
...THIS ONE-TIME CHANCE GOT AWAY FROM THEM.
THIS BRIEF MOMENT OF EXCESS STARS...

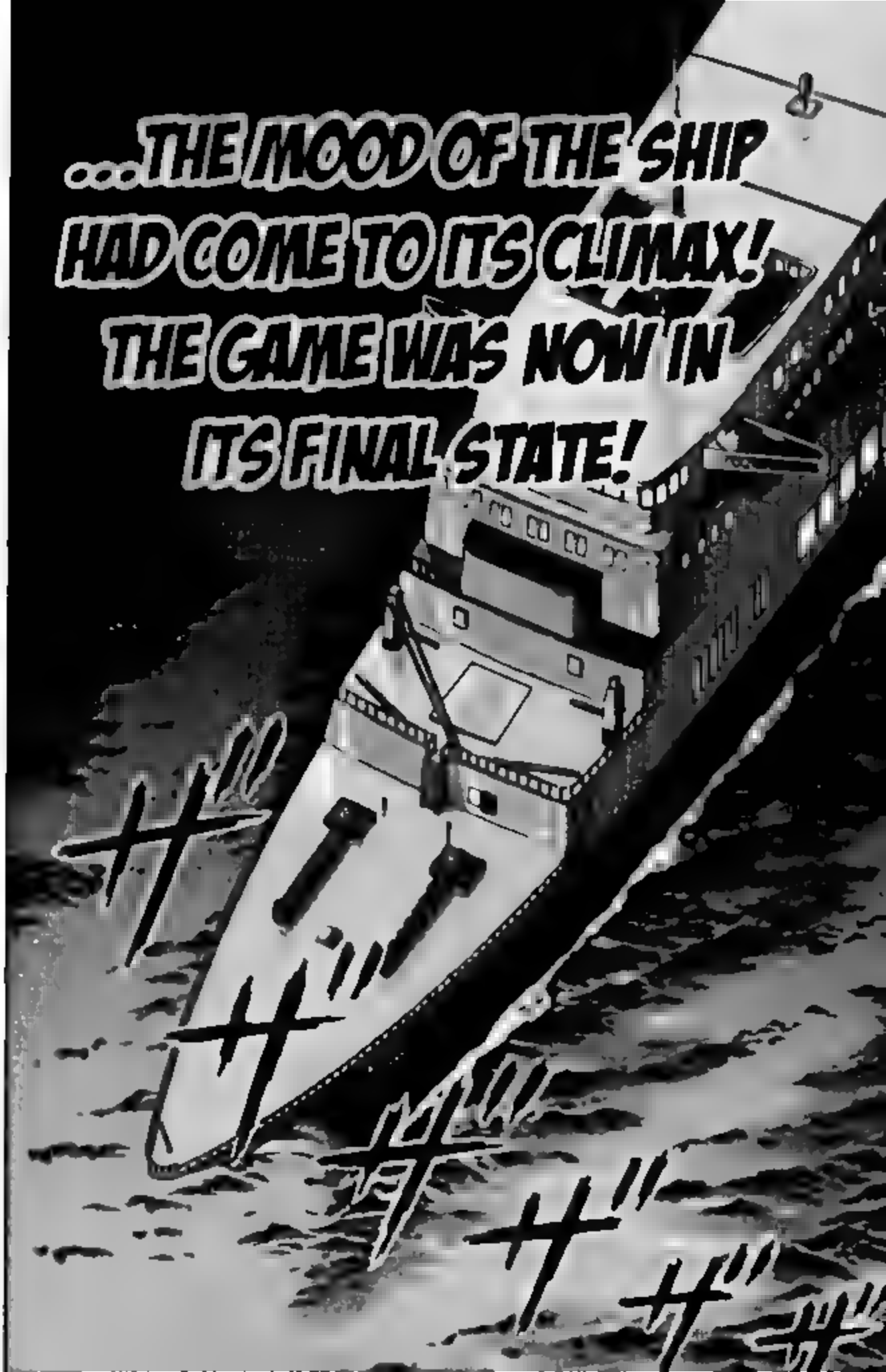
IN THE END, KAIJI AND HIS ALLIES MISSED THAT FAVORABLE TIDE.

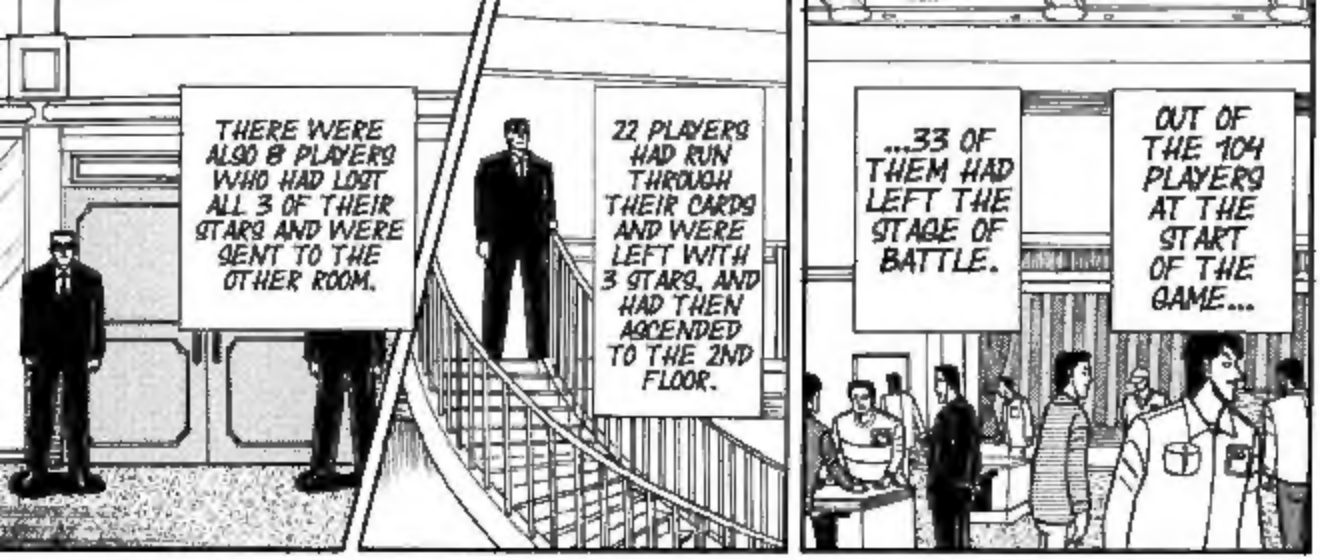

...SO THAT STARS COULD NOW ONLY BE BOUGHT FOR A MINIMUM OF 5 MILLION YEN.
...STARS HAD DISAP-PEARED FROM THE FLOOR...
...BUT BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES ...
THEY HAD THOUGHT THE PRICE COULD BE 1-2 MILLION YEN PER STAR...

THE SITUATION HAD TAKEN A DRASTIC TURN.
IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO SURVIVE THROUGH THE SALE OF STARS ALONE.
...THEY COULD ONLY BUY A MERE 2 STARS.
EVEN WITH THE 14 MILLION YEN THAT KAIJI AND HIS GROUP HAVE AMASSED...

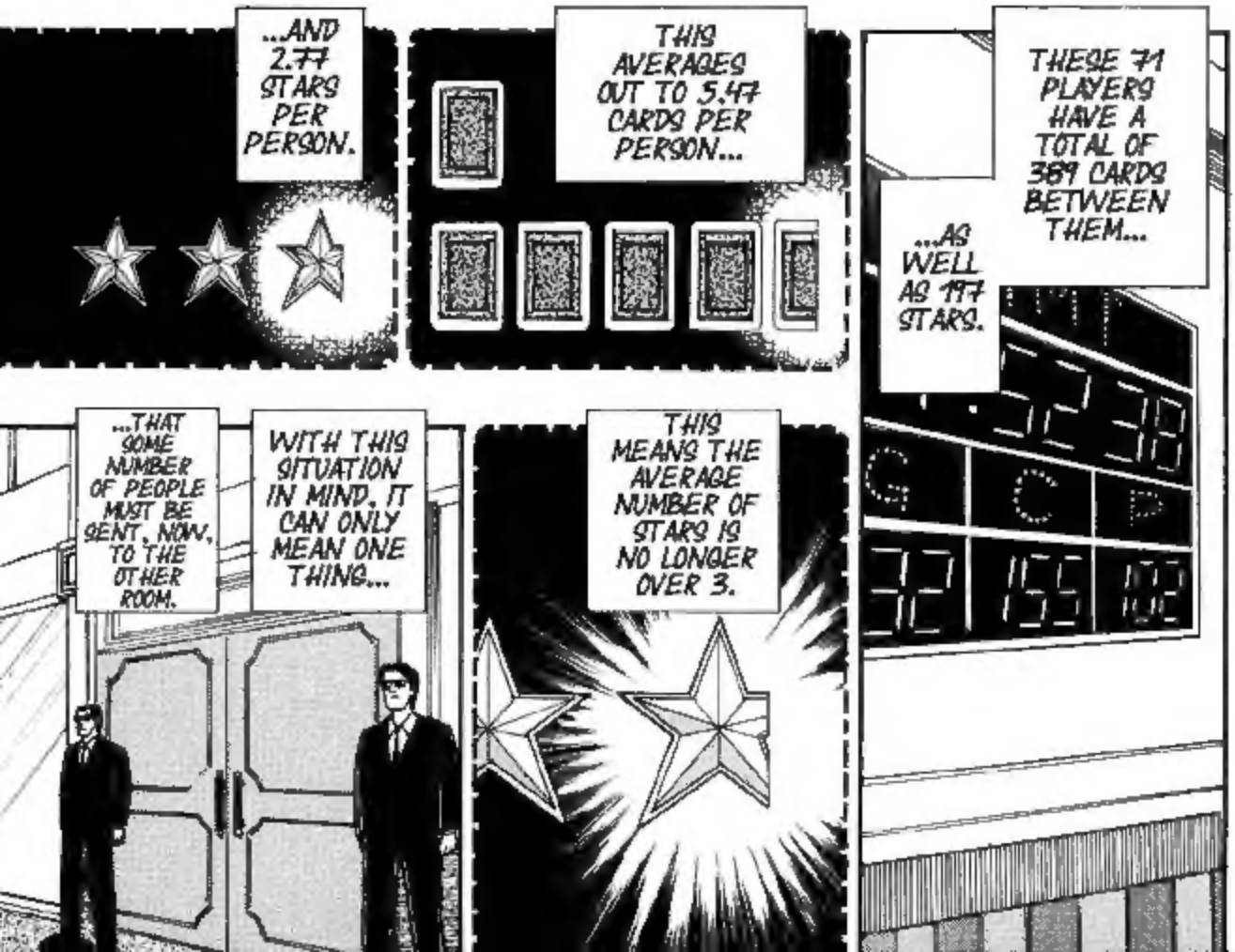

... HEAVEN HAD BECOME HELL.
A BLESS-ING HAD BECOME A CURSE
WITH JUST THIS PRICE INFLATION FOR STARS ON THE DECK OF THE SHIP...

AND, IN THE MIDST OF THIS DRASTIC CHANGE...


...THE MOOD OF THE SHIP HAD COME TO ITS CLIMAX! THE GAME WAS NOW IN ITS FINAL STATE!


OUT OF THE 104 PLAYERS AT THE START OF THE GAME...
...33 OF THEM HAD LEFT THE STAGE OF BATTLE.
22 PLAYERS HAD RUN THROUGH THEIR CARDS AND WERE LEFT WITH 3 STARS, AND HAD THEN ASCENDED TO THE 2ND FLOOR.
THERE WERE ALSO 8 PLAYERS WHO HAD LOST ALL 3 OF THEIR STARS AND WERE SENT TO THE OTHER ROOM.

THIS MEANS THAT THE PLAYERS STILL REMAINING ON THIS FLOOR...
...TOTALS 71.


THESE 71 PLAYERS HAVE A TOTAL OF 389 CARDS BETWEEN THEM...
...AS WELL AS 197 STARS.
THIS AVERAGES OUT TO 5.47 CARDS PER PERSON...
...AND 2.77 STARS PER PERSON.
THIS MEANS THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF STARS IS NO LONGER OVER 3.
WITH THIS SITUATION IN MIND, IT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING...
...THAT SOME NUMBER OF PEOPLE MUST BE SENT, NOW, TO THE OTHER ROOM.

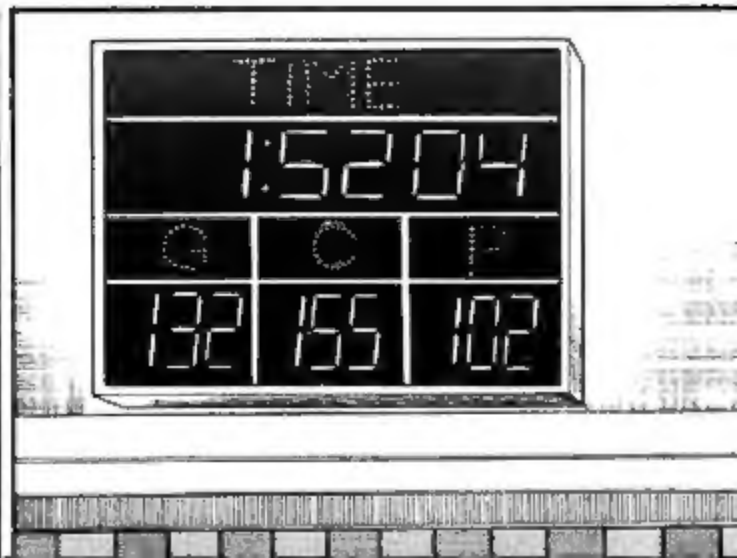
...BUT AFTER BEING UNABLE TO BUY STARS, THEY HAD FOUND PLAYERS WHO NEEDED TO GET RID OF EXTRA CARDS...
...AND HAD CONVINCED THEM TO HAND THEM OVER.
THEIR CARDS HAD DROPPED TO 0 AT A TIME...

...HAVE ONLY 5 STARS BETWEEN THE THREE OF THEM.
AND FACED WITH THIS SITUATION- KAIJI AND HIS ALLIES...

...KAIJI HAD MANAGED TO GATHER THESE THREE CARDS.

AND ALSO...
ANDOU HAD GOTTEN 1 CARD. FURUHATA HAD GOTTEN 2...

THEY COULD NO LONGER BUY ANY STARS.
THEIR REMAINING TIME HAD NOW DROPPED BELOW 2 HOURS.


TIME
1:52 04
132
155
102

SOMEHOW, WITH THESE REMAINING CARDS, THEY HAD TO FIND A WAY TO WIN.
THIS MEANT THEY HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO PLAY THEIR CARDS.

132
155
102

?.....
AH ...!

WELL, YEAH, I GUESS...
STARS ARE OUT OF THE QUESTION, BUT WE CAN STILL BUY CARDS...
HUH ...?
WE CAN GET MORE CARDS, RIGHT...?
KAIJI-SAN ...?
FURU-HATA...

HUH ...?
I GUESS I'M NOT SURE ABOUT IT, YET, BUT...

WELL ...
WE CAN WIN ...!

ス"...

I FOUND IT...!
A DEFINITE POSSIBILITY FOR A WAY OUT OF HERE!

WHA... WHAT IS IT...?! KAIJI SAN...!
HAH HHH ...!
第18話 終
Chapter 18 - Fin...